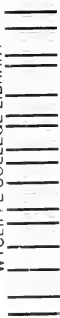


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"The Story of Sacred Song." By the
Rev. William C. Procter, F.Ph.
(James Clarke and Co., Ltd. 4s.
net.) 1925

To know something about the life and history of the composer of a hymn, or of the circumstances, or of the times in which it was written may help one to understand and appreciate it more. Several favourite hymns are connected with interesting incidents which greatly enhance their force and appeal to those who know the stories. Hence the value of a good hand-book at a reasonable price which gives such information in compact form. Mr. Procter has written a book which, so far as it goes, serves the purpose admirably. One cannot help wishing, however, that he had given somewhat less space to the story of sacred song in the Scriptures, which is merely a setting forth of what can easily be found in other hand-books, and had given more information regarding hymns and hymn-writers which many hymn-lovers find it difficult to get. Still, he has fetched a wide compass from the second century to modern days. Stories are told in relation to forty-five well-known hymns, and the excellent indices enable these and the information given about numerous others and their authors to be found easily. The chapter on "Melody Makers" is particularly interesting.

One wonders, however, at certain omissions; there is, for example, no reference to the Rev. Dr. George Matheson's well-known hymn, "O Love that wilt not let me go," which is certainly a classic, and of more real worth than many which are included, nor to Bishop Bickersteth's great missionary hymn, "For My sake and the Gospel's go," and Sullivan's fine tune, "Bishopgarth," written for that hymn, is not mentioned in the list of his tunes.

W. S. H. W.

SACRED SONG

THE STORY OF SACRED SONG



BY

The Rev. W. C. PROCTER, F.Ph.

Late Rector of Fisherton, Salisbury
and Vicar of Renhold, Bedford

LONDON

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INTRODUCTION

IN tracing the story of Sacred Song from the earliest times to the present day, we have a deeply interesting and highly important subject for our consideration.

It is deeply interesting, for a knowledge of the circumstances under which many of our favourite hymns have been composed cannot fail to increase their charm, and lead to a better understanding as well as a keener appreciation of them. Even in cases where we do not know the exact circumstances under which they were written, a knowledge of the persons who composed them, and of the period in which they first saw the light, must produce a similar effect.

It is highly important, for hymns form an essential feature in public worship ; and are a great help, not only to devotion, but to the teaching of doctrine. The best hymns form a kind of commentary upon the Bible, for they are nothing but Gospel truth set forth in rhyme, and may be said to hold the Scriptures in solution. All are founded upon some text or passage of Scripture, many of the best known being simply Scriptural paraphrases ; some illustrate and enforce the teaching of some well-known incident in

The Story of Sacred Song

the Bible, some expound and expand the meaning of one particular text, while others group the teaching of many texts around one central idea.

Most of our best hymns were written by men and women in whom "the Word of Christ dwelt richly," and may be said to be "saturated with Scripture." Hence a good hymn has been described as a good sermon ; but the former has a double advantage over the latter, being more compact and more easily remembered. Hence George Herbert quaintly writes :

"A verse may find him who a sermon flies." and the Rev. Dr. Pentecost said : "I am profoundly sure that, among the Divinely ordained instrumentalities for the conversion and sanctification of the soul, God has not given a greater than the singing of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. I have known a hymn to do God's work in a soul when every other instrumentality has failed. I have seen vast audiences melted and swayed by a simple hymn, when they have been unmoved by a powerful presentation of the Gospel from the pulpit." Even so early a writer as Basil the Great, who lived about the middle of the fourth century, said : "By song we are at once recreated and improved ; the precepts of instruction are more deeply engraven on our hearts ; for lessons which we receive unwillingly have a transient continuance, but those which

Introduction

charm and captivate in the hearing are permanently impressed upon our souls."

Some hymns have a wonderfully stimulating power which makes them valuable aids in "fighting the good fight of faith," while some have a no less wonderful tranquillizing influence which enables them to soothe and calm us amid the woes and worries of daily life ; and many a prodigal has been brought back to his Heavenly Father by the words of some familiar hymn, which have recalled earlier and better days.

It is almost impossible to overestimate the importance of hymns in fashioning the character and deepening the piety of succeeding generations, and this fact throws a tremendous responsibility upon those who compose them. The celebrated Dr. Johnson once said : " Give me the making of a nation's ballads, and I care not who make its laws " ; and so we may say : " Give me the writing of a Church's hymns, and I care not who formulates its creeds." No greater honour can fall to the lot of any man or woman than that of composing a hymn that shall be handed down to posterity as a precious heirloom ; for, as the late Primate of All Ireland well wrote : " The theologian is for the educated few, the preacher is for one generation, but the hymnist speaks an imperishable language, which is never a dead language."

We may fittingly conclude our introductory

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remarks by quoting Augustine's simple definition of a hymn as "a song containing the praise of God"; and the late Lord Selborne's wise dictum that "a good hymn should have simplicity, freshness, and reality of feeling; a consistent elevation of tone, and a rhythm easy and harmonious, but not jingling or trivial." In other words, its language should be simple and sober, not morbid or sentimental; and its rhythm should preserve a happy medium between elegant epics and drivelling doggerel. Talent can make a poem, but more than that is needed to make a hymn—deep spiritual insight is required.

CHAPTER I

THE SACRED SONGS OF SCRIPTURE :

OLD TESTAMENT

WE cannot better commence our study of the story of Sacred Song than by considering the specimens contained in Holy Scripture, and look first at the place which Psalms and Hymns occupied in worship in Old Testament times.

The earliest Sacred Song which we find in the Bible is that magnificent ode contained in Exodus xv. and sung by Moses and the Children of Israel on the shores of the Red Sea, immediately after their miraculous crossing and the utter destruction of Pharaoh and his host. It was the song of a people redeemed by blood and rescued from bondage, and not only became the model for later songs of the Church on earth but is evidently incorporated in the worship of the saints in Heaven ; for we read in Revelation xv. 3 that “ they sing the Song of Moses the servant of God and the Song of the Lamb.” It is thoroughly saturated, so to speak, with the spirit of praise, the first part being historical and expressing gratitude for their recent deliverance, and the second part being prophetic and expressing confidence in their future triumphs ;

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and in this it is a model for all hymns, in which praise should always predominate. Though a national ode, it begins with the personal note : “ The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation ” : words which are adopted in Psalm cxviii. 14, and in Isaiah xii. 2 ; and this is quite a sufficient justification for the use of hymns written in the first person singular in public worship ; but it is occupied with God from first to last, and therefore hymns should not be introspective. We see also that it was sung by a choir of women as well as men, that it had an instrumental accompaniment, and that it had a chorus or refrain : “ Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously ; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea ” ; so that all these features of hymn singing can be justified from this earliest sacred song.

Dr. Binnie well asks : “ How many communities are there, even now, sufficiently trained in music to attempt the responsive chanting of so elaborate a song ? ” and Delitzsch writes : “ There is hardly a monument of antiquity which so brilliantly justifies the traditional account of its origin ; both in its contents, and in its linguistic peculiarities, it altogether agrees with Moses.”

The period of wandering in the wilderness was marked more by murmuring and grumbling on the part of the Israelites than by singing and

Old Testament

rejoicing, but one bright little carol is recorded in Numbers xxi. 16-18, as having been sung at the digging of a well. The Revised Version translates the words :

“ Spring up, O well ; sing ye unto it :
The well which the princes digged,
Which the nobles of the people delved
By order of the law-giver, and with their staves.”
(See margin.)

There was no sign of water before they began to dig, but God had said to Moses, “ Gather the people together, and I will give them water ” ; and they sang in cheerful confidence, their labour lightened by the song, and princes and people alike taking their share of the work.

In Deuteronomy xxxii. 1-43, we have what has been called “ the swan song of Moses ” ; for, as that bird is said to spend its last breath in song, so the great leader of the Israelites was called upon to die on “ that selfsame day ” in which he uttered it, as we see from verses 48 to 50. But, if it was a valediction on the part of Moses, it was an introduction in the case of Joshua ; for we read in verse 44 that his successor was associated with him in its utterance. We see from chapter xxxi. 19-21 that the song was written at God’s command, and taught to the people as a witness to themselves and their children in the time of their future apostasy. It is therefore a detailed rehearsal of God’s mercies and their sins, a series of striking contrasts

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between His faithfulness and their fickleness ; and it abounds with earnest expostulations and solemn exhortations. It is marked by beauty and sublimity of thought, and vigour and vivacity of expression ; and is at once commemorative and anticipatory, summing up the past and future history of the chosen people. For loftiness of style, and sublimity of language, it is almost unequalled even in the pages of Holy Scripture.

The “ book of the wars of the Lord,” and the “ book of Jasher ” (from which extracts are given in Numbers xxi. 14, 15 ; Joshua x. 12, 13 ; and 2 Samuel i. 17-27), evidently contained religious poems ; while, in 1 Samuel x. 5, we see that the Schools of Prophets were musical.

The Song of Deborah, recorded in Judges v, is one of the most magnificent martial odes ever written ; being grand and graphic in style, full of power and pathos in expression, and marked by intense patriotism and fervent piety in thought and tone. Beginning with praise for God’s goodness and greatness manifested during the wilderness wanderings of the people, it goes on to thank Him for their recent deliverance from the Canaanites, and to pray expectantly for the future triumph of God’s cause and people. Turning from God to man, the inspired prophetess awards praise or blame to the various tribes of Israel, according as they had proved faithful or faithless in the national crisis through which they

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had passed ; warmly commending the courage and daring of Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin, Issachar, Zebulon and Naphtali, and scornfully condemning the cowardice and apathy of Reuben, Gad, Dan, and Asher ; ending with a bitter curse upon Meroz for shrinking from the contest, and a special blessing upon Jael for ridding them of the commander-in-chief of the enemy's army.

Very different in style, but still more admirable in thought and expression, is Hannah's Song of Thanksgiving, recorded in 1 Samuel ii. 1-10 ; which, though called a prayer, is full of praise from beginning to end. If the Song of Moses may be described as the " Te Deum " of the Old Testament, this may be called its " Magnificat " ; indeed, Mary's song of praise was evidently based on Hannah's. Though the occasion was one of thanksgiving for the gift of a son, it is evident throughout that she thought far more of the Giver than His gift ; and seems to almost lose sight of God's dealings with herself, in the thought of His dealings with mankind. She magnifies the holiness, power, omniscience, and justice of God, recording how He weakens the strong and strengthens the weak, how He impoverishes the rich and enriches the poor, how he abases the proud and exalts the humble ; and declares her belief in His superintending Providence over all the vicissitudes of life. The teaching of the greater part of the song may be

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summed up in the familiar words of one of our children's hymns :

“ Sing your Saviour's worthy praise,
Glorious in His works and ways. ”

but she rises at its close to the heights of prophetic insight, and foretells the future triumphs of Christ's Kingdom, and His world-wide dominion. It is remarkable that hers is the first direct Scriptural reference to the Messiah, God's “ anointed ” one ; and she may have foreseen that He was to be descended, according to the flesh, from that King whom her own son was to anoint as Saul's successor.

Coming to David, “ the sweet Psalmist of Israel,” we have three of his songs enshrined in the historical books which tell the story of his long and eventful life. In 2 Samuel i. 17-27, we have the touching “ In Memoriam ” ode which he composed on the death of Saul and Jonathan, and which has inspired that musical masterpiece so well known to us all as the “ Dead March in ‘ Saul.’ ” It is unsurpassed in power and in pathos, and is equal evidence of its author's intense patriotism, ardent affection, and generous magnanimity. There is a Latin motto : “ De mortuis nil nisi bonum ” (“ concerning the dead, say nothing but what is good ”), and David certainly uttered his noble tribute to Saul in this spirit. In sublime forgetfulness of all the cruel injuries and shameful injustice which he had

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suffered at his hands, he dwells exclusively on his undoubted courage and patriotism ; and then, turning from his greatest foe to his greatest friend, utters a glowing eulogium on his matchless love and devotion.

In 2 Samuel xxii. we have a song of thanksgiving, which seems to have been composed at an earlier date than its place in the historical narrative would indicate, probably at that period when “ the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies,” as we read in chapter vii. 1. It is practically the same as Psalm xviii, for there is little variation in the wording, and is written throughout in a spirit of jubilant exultation, grateful thanksgiving for past deliverances being mingled with confident anticipations of future triumphs. It is remarkable for the number of the titles which the Psalmist applies to God, nine being found in its opening sentence ; for its glowing imagery, largely drawn from his wilderness wanderings ; for its intense humility, all the honour of his victories being ascribed to God ; and for its fervent expressions of love and adoration.

In 1 Chronicles xvi. 7-36, we have another Psalm of Thanksgiving, composed to celebrate the removal of the Ark to the tent which he had prepared for it at Jerusalem, and which consists of almost the whole of Psalm xcvi, the first fifteen verses of Psalm cv, and the last two of Psalm cvi. This composite Psalm is full of praise

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and adoration, in which the whole kingdom of nature is invited to join, and ends with words of fervent supplication.

The Book of Psalms has well been called "the Hymn Book of the Universal Church" ; for there is nothing corresponding to it in the New Testament, and, with the addition of the "Gloria," the Psalms are equally suitable for Christian as for Jewish worship. The Hebrew title of the Book is "Tehillim," or "Book of Praises," because praise is its most conspicuous feature, and the last five begin and end with the words : "Praise ye the Lord" ; indeed, in the concluding Psalm, the exhortation occurs thirteen times in six verses ! The word "Psalms" comes from its title in the Septuagint Version, and signifies "Songs sung to stringed instruments," indicating their original orchestral accompaniment (see Psalms xxxiii. 2, and lxxi. 22).

As regards their authorship, their composition covers a period of at least a thousand years, from the days of Moses to the time of the return from the Babylonian captivity, and possibly even later. Nearly half of them are ascribed in their titles to David, twenty-four to the leaders of sacred song in the Temple, two to Solomon, and one to Moses, while the remainder are anonymous.

As regards their character, they embrace every style of lyrical composition ; some are historical, and it is possible to construct a detailed history

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of the Chosen People from the call of Abraham to the return from the captivity in Babylon from them ; some are doctrinal, and thirteen of them are headed “ Maschil,” which means “ to give instruction ” ; some are acrostical, being evidently written in alphabetical form as an aid to the memory ; some are prophetical, and cover the earthly life, death, resurrection, ascension, and second coming of Christ, as well as the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the triumphs of the Gospel ; some are penitential, expressing the deepest sorrow for sin ; but most are devotional, and suited alike for public and private worship.

As regards their contents, every variety and shade of feeling and sentiment finds its appropriate expression in this wonderful Book—adoration, aspiration, jubilation, exultation, intercession, meditation, lamentation, humiliation, supplication, consecration ; prayer and praise, doubt and trust, fear and hope, sorrow and joy, trial and triumph. No emotion is unexpressed, no experience is unrecorded ; and Athanasius well called the Book “ a mirror, in which a man may see himself, and the motions of his soul ” ; while Calvin aptly termed it “ an anatomy of all parts of the soul.”

As regards their use, they were not only employed by the ancient Jewish Church, but by the early Christian Church, as we shall presently see ; and Jerome says that, in his day, they were sung in the fields and vineyards of Palestine.

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Their pages have been stained with the blood of martyrs and wetted with the tears of saints in every age of the world's history ; and they have served to quicken faith, inspire hope, and deepen love ; to soothe the sorrowing, cheer the despondent, and comfort the dying.

David was the first to arrange and systematize what is called in 1 Chronicles vi. 31, "The service of song in the House of the Lord," and it is interesting and instructive to consider its completeness and variety. We see from chapter xxiii. 3-5 that, out of the 38,000 Levites, no fewer than four thousand were set apart for this work ; and from chapter xxv. 7 that 288 of these were specially trained singers, the remainder being apparently instrumentalists. This magnificent orchestra was in charge of three leaders, keeping time with cymbals ; the first three to be appointed being Asaph, Heman, and Ethan, while Chenaniah was "master of the song," as we see from chapter xv. 16-22. The principal instruments used were the cymbals, which are named sixteen times ; the viol or psaltery, spoken of twenty-eight times ; the cornet and the trumpet, named thirty times ; and the harp, which is spoken of forty-two times ; and this is surely a sufficient answer to those who still object to the enrichment of the worship of God by instrumental music, though doubtless, as the poet Pope says :

Old Testament

“ Some to church repair,
Not for the doctrine, but the music there.”

Upon the other hand, those who object to women leading the praises of God in public worship should notice that, in 1 Chronicles xxv. 5, 6, we read that Heman's “ three daughters were under the hands of their father for song in the House of the Lord ” ; and that, in Ezra ii. 65, “ singing men and singing women ” were among those who returned from the captivity in Babylon. The wearing of surplices by choristers may be justified from 2 Chronicles v. 12, where we read of “ all the singers being arrayed in white linen ” ; and their payment (at all events where their duties are daily, as they were in the Temple), from the Revised Version of 1 Chronicles ix. 33, where we are told that “ the singers were free from other service ; for they were employed in their work day and night ” ; and from Nehemiah xi. 23, where we read that “ it was the King's commandment concerning them, that a certain portion should be for the singers, due for every day.”

We have no time to consider in detail the prominent part played by sacred song in the bringing of the Ark to Zion by David (see 1 Chronicles xv. 25-28), the opening of the Temple by Solomon (see 2 Chronicles v. 11-14), its reopening by Hezekiah (see 2 Chronicles xxix. 30), the laying of the foundation of the

The Story of Sacred Song

Temple by Zerubbabel and Joshua (see Ezra iii. 10, 11), and the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah (see chapter xii. 27-43); but, ere leaving the Old Testament, we must just glance at some more of its sacred songs embodied in the prophetic books.

Before doing so, allusion should be made to the Song of Solomon, which is the only one which has come down to us out of the "thousand and five" which we are told in 1 Kings iv. 32, that he wrote. The first verse well describes it as "the song of songs," for it has never been surpassed for literary grace and beauty. Bishop Louth calls it "a sacred pastoral drama"; and, while literally it depicts the love of a virtuous maiden, spurning the seductions of court life, remaining faithful to her shepherd lover who loves her with intense adoration, and rewarded in the end by a happy union with the object of her affections, there can be no doubt that figuratively it represents the spiritual love and union of Christ and His Church.

The first song in the Prophetic Books is that contained in Isaiah v. 1-7, and it is the counterpart of the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy xxxii which we have already considered. As it had there been prophetically recorded in verse 32: "Their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter";

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so here it is said in verse 2 : “ He looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.” In both passages there is the same contrast between God’s goodness and man’s ingratitude, and in both doom is denounced for disobedience. In Isaiah xxxviii. 9-20, we find Hezekiah’s song of thanksgiving, “ when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness.” It is a plaintive and pathetic composition, dwelling chiefly upon the shortness and uncertainty of human life, of which two striking emblems are given—a shepherd’s tent, which is taken down merely by loosening a few cords and uprooting a few pegs ; and the cutting off of a weaver’s web from the loom when his task is finished. In striking contrast to human frailty, Hezekiah dwells upon Divine forgiveness, giving to us one of its most beautiful Scriptural illustrations in verse 17 : “ Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back.”

A still more remarkable example of plaintive pathos is to be found in the Lamentations of Jeremiah, which, like the Song of Solomon, occupy a book all to themselves. The Septuagint Version opens with the following statement of the circumstances under which it was composed : “ And it came to pass, after Israel was taken captive and Jerusalem was laid waste, that Jeremiah sat weeping ; and he lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem, and said.” The five elegies of which it is composed are of

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a twofold character, chapters i, ii, and iv, dealing with the destruction and desolation of Jerusalem (as also chapter v.), and chapter iii. with the more personal sorrows and sufferings of the prophet. The style is acrostical throughout, each of the verses in the former beginning with one of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, while in chapter iii. three verses are devoted to each letter, chapter v. being irregular ; and in the first three chapters the stanzas are in the form of triplets, while in the last two they are couplets. which is the usual form of Hebrew poetry.

In Jonah ii. we have a Song of Thanksgiving, composed in the strangest of all places, under the most unlikely of all circumstances ; for we read in the introductory verse : “ Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish’s belly ! ” It is noteworthy that, although it is called a prayer, it is full of praise ; the prophet’s faith enabling him to give thanks for his deliverance beforehand. The passage is full of quotations from, and allusions to, the Book of Psalms ; and it is the natural utterance of a prophet well versed in the Scriptures which were then written.

The magnificent ode in Habakkuk iii. forms one of the grandest chapters in the whole Bible ; and, from its introductory and concluding notes, was evidently composed for public worship, to be sung to an orchestral accompaniment. It contains the prophet’s response to the Divine

Old Testament

revelation which he had received, and in it he recalls the wonderful manifestations which God had made of His glory in former days, and prays for a similar manifestation of His Power in the present. Contemplating the coming Chaldean invasion, he nobly declares his unshaken confidence and joy in God, though he might be deprived of every earthly blessing, and ends with words of firm faith and glowing fervour.

Here we may briefly refer to the “*Benedicite omnia opera*” (which is sometimes used as an alternative canticle to the “*Te Deum*”), because it is an apocryphal addition to the third chapter of the Book of the prophet Daniel. In the narrative of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego being cast into the burning fiery furnace for refusing to worship the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up, the following is inserted after the words : “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace”:— “And they walked in the midst of the fire, praising God, and blessing the Lord. . . . Then the three, as out of one mouth, praised, glorified, and blessed God in the furnace” ; the words of the famous canticle being then recorded, with a preface and doxology. It is really an extended paraphrase of Psalm cxlviii, and was used in the Jewish Church for a century or two before the time of our Lord, being adopted by the Christian Church in the fourth century.

CHAPTER II

THE SACRED SONGS OF SCRIPTURE :

NEW TESTAMENT

COMING to the New Testament, we find that Christianity was cradled in song ; and the birth of our Saviour was preceded, accompanied, and followed by a burst of sacred song. Two beautiful odes were uttered before our Lord's birth, which have been used in public worship ever since the beginning of the sixth century. The Song of the Virgin Mary, or " Magnificat " (as it is usually called from the first word of the Latin Version), was uttered by her on receiving the congratulations of her cousin Elizabeth, and is recorded in St. Luke i. 46-55. It came from her, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as spontaneously as the song of a lark mounting up into the heavens, and is marked by adoring gratitude and impassioned fervour. The first four verses contain praise for God's mercies to herself personally, and afford a strong anticipatory protest against Mariolatry ; the next four contain praise for God's dealings with mankind generally, and the words are very similar to those of Hannah's Song, as we have already seen ; while the last

New Testament

two contain praise for the fulfilment of God's promises in the Old Testament to Israel.

The Song of Zacharias, or "Benedictus" (as it is called from its first word in the Latin Version) is recorded in verses 67-79 of the same chapter, but it was uttered under widely different circumstances. Unlike Mary, who received the same angel's far more astounding message with unquestioning faith, Zacharias was stricken dumb for his unbelief in the promise of a son. The utterance of this noble ode was the first use he made of the restored power of speech, but doubtless the thoughts had been long burning in his mind. The song is one of mingled praise and prophecy, the first part being a thanksgiving for the accomplishment of long-promised redemption, and the second a prediction of its glorious results. It is noteworthy that the only allusion which he makes to his own personal mercies is to the honour conferred upon his new-born child, in being the forerunner of the Saviour and the herald of the dawn of the Gospel day.

And now we come to the only recorded occasion when the Song of the Angels was heard by human beings upon the earth, on the plains of Bethelhem on the first Christmas Eve, as we read in chapter ii. 13, 14. We are told in Job xxxviii. 7, that, at the Creation, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," but no human ear heard those angelic

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songs. Now, however, upon the astonished ears of the awe-struck shepherds, burst the full and harmonious chorus of "the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men."

We know the deep interest which the angels take in man's salvation ; for they are represented in 1 Peter i. 12, as " desiring to look into " the great plan of human redemption ; our Lord Himself tells us in St. Luke xv. 10, that " there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth ;" and we are told in Hebrews i. 14, that they are " all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." No wonder, therefore, that the inauguration of man's redemption filled them with greater joy than the completion of the world's creation, for they knew that the result would be the " bringing many sons unto glory," as we read in Hebrews ii. 10. But let us not overlook the pure unselfishness of their joy, as it was over a redemption for fallen men, not for " the angels which left their first estate " ; for, as we read in verse 16, " He took not on Him the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham." Yet there was no room for jealousy or envy in those pure beings, and they rejoiced to be the bearers of " good tidings of great joy " in which their brethren could never be sharers. The Incarnation was a new

New Testament

revelation to the angels of God's marvellous love, and they saw in it the highest proof of God's glory ; for it was alike a miracle of Divine Power, a masterpiece of Divine Wisdom, and the crowning manifestation of Divine Grace.

The Song of Simeon, or the " Nunc Dimittis " (as it is usually called from its opening words in the Latin Version) is recorded in St. Luke ii. 29-32, and has been regularly used in public worship since the beginning of the seventh century. It was the " swan song " of the aged saint, for it was his farewell to earth and anticipation of Heaven. He had long waited in faith and patience for " the consolation of Israel," it having been " revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ " ; and, now that he was privileged to hold the Holy Babe in his arms, his dearest desire was fulfilled, and he took it as God's signal for his release from the burden of the flesh. He not only saw in this humble babe of poor parents God's promised Saviour, but he foresaw that He would be " a light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as the " Glory of Israel."

We need not expect to find in the New Testament such definite and detailed arrangements for " the service of song in the House of the Lord " as in the Old ; seeing that, in place of the numerous regulations for public worship in the latter, we have the solitary " rubrics "

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contained in 1 Corinthians xiv. 26, 40, in the former : " Let all things be done unto edifying . . . let all things be done decently and in order " ; but there are many indications of and exhortations to the use of sacred song in public and in private in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. The utterance of spontaneous sacred song seems to have been one of the " gifts of the Spirit," of which we have the first evidence in the apostolic hymn recorded in Acts iv. 24-30, based upon Psalm ii. In 1 Corinthians xiv. 26, we are told that all the Christian worshippers in that city had a psalm to utter when they came together, often in " an unknown tongue," as we see from verses 13-17. Once more in Ephesians v. 18-19, the command : " Be filled with the Spirit " is immediately followed by the words : " Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

The use of hymns for teaching as well as thanksgiving is indicated in Colossians iii. 16, where we read : " Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom ; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord " ; while many passages in the New Testament Epistles have such a decided rhythm in the original Greek that they seem to have been intended as sacred songs.

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Turning from public to private worship, we read in St. James v. 13 : “ Is any among you afflicted ? Let him pray. Is any merry ? Let him sing psalms ” ; but there are two instances of singing in suffering recorded in the New Testament. In St. Matthew xxvi. 30, we read of our Lord and His disciples that, on the night of agony preceding His crucifixion, “ when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives ; ” and in Acts xvi. 25, we are told that, in the prison at Philippi, “ at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God.” They had been cruelly beaten, and their “ feet were made fast in the stocks ” ; but, though they had bleeding backs, they had happy hearts, and could sing in the stocks and praise in the prison !

The Book of the Revelation clearly shows us that Heaven is flooded with praise, and in its pages we have the words of twelve of the songs which St. John heard in his wonderful vision. In chapter iv. 8—11, we have that of the four living creatures, who apparently represent redeemed creation : “ Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come ” ; and that of the four and twenty elders, who probably represent the glorified Church made up of Jews and Gentiles : “ Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power ; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.”

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To these two songs of praise for Creation are added three for Redemption in chapter v. 8-14 ; that of the living creatures and elders addressed to the Lamb : “ Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof ; for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy Blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests ; and we shall reign on the earth ” ; the responsive chorus of myriads of angels : “ Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing ” ; and that of all creation, animate and inanimate : “ Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.”

In chapter vii. 9-12, we have the song of those redeemed from the last great tribulation which shall come upon the earth : “ Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb ” ; with the assenting angelic chorus : “ Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever.”

In chapter xi. 16, 17, we find the anticipatory triumph song of the four and twenty elders upon the announcement of the beginning of Christ's personal reign upon the earth : “ We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and

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wast, and art to come ; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned."

In chapter xv. 1-4, we have the triumph song of the victors in the final contest with the powers of evil symbolized by " the beast and his image " : " Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty ; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of Saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name ? for Thou only art holy ; for all nations shall come and worship before Thee ; for Thy judgments are made manifest."

Once more, in chapter xix. 1-7, we have three more triumphal odes ; the first uttered by " a great voice of much people in heaven " : " Alleluia ; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God ; for true and righteous are His judgments : for He hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand " ; the next, the assenting chorus of the living creatures and elders : " Amen, Alleluia " ; and the last, " the voice of a great multitude " : " Alleluia ; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready."

Music is the only one of earth's arts which we

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know to have originated from Heaven, and it is the only one which we know will be perpetuated there. Charles Kingsley said : " Music has been called ' the speech of angels ' ; I will go further, and call it the speech of God Himself " ; Kirke White writes :

" Oh, surely melody from Heaven was sent
To cheer the soul, when tired with human strife ;
To soothe the wayward heart by sorrow rent,
And soften down the rugged road of life."

While Pope declares :

" Our joys below it can improve,
And antedate the bliss above."

Two things should be observed, in conclusion, about the songs of Heaven ; and the first is that they are all hymns of adoration and thanksgiving. Our praying days will soon be over, but, as Isaac Watts writes :

" My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures."

The second is that the chief theme of the songs of Heaven is Redemption ; and, as its fulness of meaning will only then be completely realized, we read twice over of " a new song " (chapters v. 9, and xiv. 3). In the second of these passages we are told that " no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth." This will be, therefore :

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“ A song which even angels
Can never, never sing ;
They know not Christ as Saviour,
But worship Him as King.”

It is a song which must be, in part at least,
learned here ; for

“ No lips untuned can sing that song,
Or join the music there ” ;

and, as another of our hymns says :

“ When, in scenes of glory,
I sing the new, new song,
'Twill be the old, old story,
That I have loved so long.”

We must, therefore, begin Heaven's songs
here below, or we shall never sing them above ;
we must rehearse them in the Church Militant
ere we can perform them in the Church Trium-
phant :

“ Learning here, by faith and love,
Songs of praise to sing above.”

CHAPTER III

LATIN, GREEK, GERMAN AND AMERICAN HYMNS

IN tracing the story of Sacred Song from Bible times to the present day, we shall find that hymns are the very essence of the history of the Christian Church, for they faithfully reflect the religious condition of the periods during which they were composed. Thus the simple spiritual ideas of the Primitive Church, the mystic and emblematic conceptions of the Dark Ages, the clear light of Evangelical truth that dawned at the Reformation, the intense personal aspirations which marked the great Revivals, and the noble ecclesiastical conceptions that had birth in the Oxford Movement, are all accurately reflected in the hymns which were composed during these eras, and the Church Universal is richer for them all.

The earliest reference to Sacred Song outside the Scriptures is given in a letter sent by Pliny, the Roman Governor of the province of Pontus in Asia Minor, to the Emperor Trajan in A.D. 104; in which he said that it was the custom of the Christians to meet on a fixed day, and "sing hymns to Christ as God." Some of these Primitive

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Christian hymns are still in use in our Church services ; thus, in addition to the Scriptural Canticles and Psalms, we have the “ *Gloria Patri*,” the “ *Ter Sanctus*,” and the “ *Gloria in Excelsis*.” The former is used at the end of every Psalm and Canticle in the services of the Church, as well as at the opening of the Praise portion of many Nonconformist services, while both the latter are enshrined in the matchless Communion Office of the Church of England. The “ *Ter Sanctus* ” has its origin in the Song of the Seraphim recorded in Isaiah vi. 3 : “ Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts ; the whole earth is full of His glory ” ; and in that of the Four Living Creatures in Revelation iv. 8 : “ Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” The “ *Gloria in Excelsis* ” is, of course, an expansion of the angels’ song contained in St. Luke ii. 14 : “ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men ” ; and it was used as a morning hymn in the second century.

The earliest ordinary hymn which has come down to us is Keble’s translation of what was known as the “ Lamp-lighting Hymn,” dating from the end of the second century, beginning :

“ Hail, gladdening Light, of His pure glory poured,
Who is the Immortal Father, Heavenly, Blest.”

Next in order of antiquity comes an expanded translation by Chatfield of one composed by

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SYNESIUS, Bishop of Ptolemais, in North Africa, at the end of the fourth century, commencing :

“ Lord Jesus, think on me,
And purge away my sin ;
From earth-born passions set me free,
And make me pure within.”

Those familiar with Charles Kingsley's striking character-sketch of this Bishop in “ Hypatia,” showing that he divided his time between writing poetry, talking philosophy and religion, breeding horses, training dogs for hunting, and planting trees, will probably be surprised that so spiritual a composition could emanate from the pen of the “ Squire Bishop.”

AMBROSE, Archbishop of Milan, who was born about 340, and died in 397, did for public worship in Italy what David did for it at Jerusalem, and to him we owe the establishment of metrical hymns as a regular part of Divine Service. He composed at least twelve hymns, but nearly a hundred are now extant which are called “ Ambrosian,” and date from the same time, which was the period of the great Arian controversy. Arius, who denied the true Deity of Christ, had composed many sacred songs to popularize his teaching, and the object of these hymns was to counteract the dangerous heresy. The following hymns date from this period : “ Now that the daylight fills the sky,” “ O Jesu, Lord of light and grace,” “ O Trinity, most blessed Light,” “ Before the ending of the day,” “ O come,

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Redeemer of mankind, appear," " Light's glittering morn bedecks the sky," " O Lord most High, Eternal King," and " The eternal gifts of Christ the King."

The grandest of all uninspired hymns is unquestionably the "*Te Deum*." There is a tradition that it was composed at the baptism of Augustine by Ambrose in 387, each contributing alternate verses ; but there is no solid foundation for the legend. It is first mentioned in 527, but it is then referred to as being well known, and it is probably the growth of centuries. Our English version was first sung at Herne Church, of which Ridley was vicar from 1538 to 1549, and the translation has been attributed to Cranmer.

We now come to PRUDENTIUS, a Spanish lawyer and judge, born a few years later than Ambrose, who has given us the well-known hymns for Christmas and Epiphany, beginning : " Of the Father's love begotten," and " Earth has many a noble city " ; also the one for Innocents' Day, commencing " Sweet flowrets of the martyr band," both the latter being translations from the same Latin poem.

To ANATOLIUS, Bishop of Constantinople in the middle of the fifth century, we owe the beautiful Evening hymn, " The day is past and over " ; which was as commonly used in the islands of the Ægean Sea as " Glory to Thee, my

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God, this night," is in our own land ; also the one commencing, " Fierce was the wild billow."

FORTUNATUS, Bishop of Poitiers in France, who was born in 530 and died in 609, is represented in our hymn books by the following Passiontide hymns : " The Royal Banners forward go," and " Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle," the former being composed for use as a processional hymn.

ANDREW, Archbishop of Crete, who was born at Damascus about 660 and died in 732, has bequeathed us the fine Lenten hymn commencing " Christian, dost thou see them ? " which is usually sung to the tune which Dr. Dykes named after him.

Coming at last to the shores of old England, the VENERABLE BEDE (who was born at Jarrow-on-Tyne in 673 and died in 735) wrote a book of hymns in addition to his other literary efforts ; and we have that for St. John the Baptist's Day, beginning " The great forerunner of the morn," from his pen. Passing from the fertile coast of England to the desolate region bordering the Dead Sea, we come to a famous nursery of sacred song—the monastery of Mar Saba. This occupies a weird situation on the edge of a lofty cliff which descends a sheer 500 feet to the gorge of the Kedron, and it is so built into the rock that it is almost impossible to distinguish man's masonry from God's. The monastery was founded

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in the early part of the sixth century, and two of its early inhabitants were famous hymn writers.

JOHN DAMASCENE, so called from his birthplace, died about 780, leaving us the noble Easter hymns, "The Day of Resurrection" and "Come, ye faithful, raise the strain of triumphant gladness"; also the popular one beginning "Those eternal bowers man hath never trod." To his nephew, STEPHEN THE SABAITE (who was born in 725, taken to the monastery at the early age of 10, and died there in 794) we owe that universal favourite, "Art thou weary? Art thou languid?"

Three more of our well-known hymns come from another monastery, the Studium at Constantinople, whither JOSEPH, a Silician by birth, retired after an adventurous early life at the beginning of the ninth century, and where he died in 883. These are "O happy band of pilgrims," "Stars of the morning, so gloriously bright," and the beautiful funeral hymn, "Safe home, safe home in port."

The well-known hymn for Palm Sunday, 'All glory, laud, and honour,' dates from the same period, and has an interesting history. THEODULPH, Bishop of Orleans, was suspected of disloyalty to the throne, deprived of his see, and cast into prison at Metz. While there, he is said to have composed this hymn, and sung it as the Emperor (Louis the Pious) and his court

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passed in procession beneath the window of his cell on their way to the Cathedral on Palm Sunday, 821. It is recorded that the Emperor was so struck by its beauty that he ordered the release of the Bishop, and ever since then it has been sung on Palm Sunday by the Western Church. Until the 17th century, the following quaint verse formed part of the hymn, but has since been judiciously omitted :

“ Be Thou, O Lord, the rider,
And we the little ass ;
That to God’s holy city
Together we may pass ! ”

Two other well-known hymns, which date from about the same period, but whose authorship has never been ascertained, are, “ Blessed city, heavenly Salem,” and “ Christ is made the sure Foundation.” These are translations by Dr. Neale from a Latin poem entitled “ Urbs beata, Jerusalem,” which may date from the sixth or seventh century. The famous “ Veni, Creator Spiritus,” in its English translation by Bishop Cosin, “ Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,” is the only metrical hymn in the Prayer Book, being enshrined in our ordinal. The authorship of the Latin original has been variously ascribed to Ambrose of Milan, Gregory the Great, and the Emperor Charlemagne ; but the earliest recorded instance of its use is in 898, at the removal of some relics. Since then it has been

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universally employed throughout Western Christendom on such special occasions as the coronation of Kings, the consecration of Bishops, the ordination of Priests, and at Confirmation Services. Another beautiful hymn addressed to the Holy Spirit is "Veni, Sancte Spiritus," which Archbishop Trench has described as "the loveliest of all the hymns in the whole circle of Latin sacred poetry," and which boasts a royal author. KING ROBERT II of France (who began to reign in 997 and died in 1031) was an excellent musician but a weak monarch, quite unable to deal either with the turbulence of the times in which he lived, or with the temper of his wife Constantia ! His sorrows and troubles, both political and domestic, may be traced in Caswell's translation, especially in the second verse :

"Thou, of comforters the best,
Thou, the soul's most welcome guest,
Sweet refreshment here below ;
In our labour rest most sweet,
Grateful coolness in the heat,
Solace in the midst of woe."

Whether or not France was the better for his rule, Christendom is certainly the richer for his hymn ; and it was his delight to direct the choir at the church of St. Denis at matins and evensong (crowned and in his royal robes) and sing with the monks at Mass.

We now come to two contemporary monks,

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who have given us some of our sweetest hymns, the two BERNARDS.

THE ABBOT OF CLAIRVAUX was the more famous, who combined the offices of ecclesiastic and statesman, and was the most prominent man of his time. The Kings of England and France, the Emperor of Germany, and the Pope of Rome, were alike guided by him ; and his persuasive eloquence ruled the fortunes of Europe. Born in 1091, when Peter the Hermit was preaching the first Crusade, he stirred the whole continent by proclaiming the second fifty years later ; and his strong personality and magnetic influence drew around him a large body of monks. His father forsook his baronial castle to live in the cloisters, five of his brothers joined him (two abandoning their wives in order to do so), and a band of fifteen young knights (headed by a son of the King of France) who came to hear him preach also entered his monastery. His teaching was so strongly evangelical, on the subject of "Justification by Faith," that Luther called him "the best monk that ever lived" ; and, notwithstanding all offers of preferment, he died a humble abbot in 1153. His most famous work was a beautiful Latin poem, 200 lines long, commencing, "Jesus, dulcis memoria ;" which has given birth to such familiar hymns as "Jesu, the very thought is sweet," "Jesu, the very thought of Thee," "O Jesu, King most wonderful," "Jesu, Thy

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mercies are untold," " O Jesu, Thou the beauty art," and " Jesu, Thou joy of loving hearts." The same Bernard also composed a series of poems addressed to our Lord upon the Cross, from which we get one of our most beautiful Passion hymns, " O Sacred Head, surrounded by crown of piercing thorn."

BERNARD OF CLUGNY was born at Morlaix in Brittany, in the twelfth century, of English parentage, but few details have come down to us concerning his life. He was a most saintly man, and, when walking in the cloisters with his fellow monks, would often say, " Dear brethren, I must go ; there is someone waiting for me in my cell," that someone being his Lord and Saviour, with whom he delighted to hold communion. One of his sayings which has been preserved is " The Name of Jesus is honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, joy in the heart, medicine in the soul ; and there are no charms in any discourse where His Name is not heard."

His greatest poem was written in 1145, and is entitled " Hora novissima " ; in which he dwells upon the corruptions of the evil age in which he lived, and cheers his soul with visions of the New Jerusalem. In his dedicatory epistle, he indicates the spirit in which he wrote it : " Lord, to the end that my heart may think, that my pen may write, and that my mouth may set forth Thy praise, pour alike into my heart

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and pen and mouth Thy grace ! ” The original Latin poem contains about three thousand lines, and Dr. Neale’s translation of a part of it has given us four of our most beautiful hymns upon the glories of Heaven :—“ Brief life is here our portion,” “ The world is very evil,” “ For thee, O dear, dear country,” and “ Jerusalem the golden ; ” with their common ending :

“ O sweet and blessèd country,
The home of God’s elect,
O sweet and blessèd country
That eager hearts expect ;
Jesu, in mercy bring us
To that dear land of rest ;
Who art, with God the Father,
And Spirit, ever Blest.”

Dr. Neale tells, with pardonable pride, of a little child who was suffering intense pain, but would lie quiet and happy while the whole poem on the “ Better Land ” was being read to her.

The thirteenth century witnessed the birth of several famous hymns, though many have had to be greatly altered to fit them for inclusion in Protestant collections.

ADAM OF SAN VICTOR, called by Dr. Neale “ the greatest of mediæval poets,” composed the fine hymn for St. Stephen’s Day, commencing, “ Yesterday, with exultation ” ; and BONAVENTURE has given us the beautiful Passion hymn beginning “ In the Lord’s atoning grief.” The celebrated “ Stabat Mater Dolorosa ” (composed by JACOBUS DE BENEDICTIS) has been justly

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styled "the most pathetic hymn of the Middle Ages," and owes its fame largely to the exquisite music to which Rossini has wedded it; "At the Cross her station keeping" being a free translation of a part of it.

The "*Dies Iræ*" is probably the grandest hymn in any language, unequalled for its vivid and dramatic representation of the Day of Judgment. It was written by THOMAS OF CELANO, and has been the subject of over 150 English and 90 German translations; none of which, however, attains to the majestic grandeur of the original. The best known are "Day of wrath, O day of mourning," written by DR. IRONS in Paris in 1848, after hearing the Latin poem impressively chanted during the funeral service of the Archbishop in the Cathedral of Notre Dame; and "That Day of wrath, that dreadful Day," by SIR WALTER SCOTT, who inserted it in the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." The late Mr. Gladstone calls this "the most sublime poem of modern times," and it was a great favourite with its author, who was often heard to whisper its concluding lines during his last illness :

"Be Thou, O Christ, the sinner's stay,
Though heaven and earth shall pass away!"

Goethe has also introduced the hymn into his wonderful play of "Faust," and Mozart has composed some grand music for it.

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THOMAS AQUINAS, called "the angelic Doctor," also lived during the thirteenth century, and was the greatest of the "Schoolmen." He induced Pope Urban IV to institute the Festival of Corpus Christi, in 1264, in honour of the doctrine of Transubstantiation ; and some of our Communion hymns, much altered, are translations from his ; such as, "Now, my tongue, the mystery telling," "Lo, the angels' Food is given," "The Heavenly Word proceeding forth," and "Thee we adore, O Hidden Saviour."

From this time the period of decadence set in, and we find but few Latin hymns of any note in succeeding centuries ; the best known being : "To the Name of our Salvation," which dates from the fifteenth century ; "O come, all ye faithful," probably from the seventeenth ; and "O come, O come, Emmanuel," and "The strife is o'er," from the eighteenth, the authors of the originals being unknown.

Allusion may here be fittingly made to the REV. J. M. NEALE, the gifted translator of most of our Latin and Greek hymns, though he did not live till the nineteenth century (being born in 1818 and dying in 1866). He knew no less than twenty languages, twelve of them perfectly ; while his skill as a translator was unique, as the following incident shows. One day, when assisting the Rev John Keble in the compilation of a new hymn-book, the latter left the room to look

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for some papers. On his return, Dr. Neale said : “ I thought you told me that all the hymns in your ‘ Christian Year ’ were original ” ; and, when Keble confirmed the statement, he showed him a Latin manuscript of one of them. Keble was completely mystified, declaring that he had never seen it ; when Dr. Neale gaily replied : “ No wonder ! for I have just turned your hymn into Latin while you were out of the room ! ”

Let us conclude this portion of our subject by noticing some of the translations of German hymns which appear in our compilations. Germany has enriched the praise of Christendom more than any other nation, for probably more than one hundred thousand hymns have emanated from her. Of course, MARTIN LUTHER was the father of German hymnology ; for, while sitting at his window, he heard a blind beggar sing, and said to himself : “ If only I could make Gospel songs which people could sing, and which would spread themselves up and down cities, how splendid it would be ! ” He was born in 1483, dying in 1546 ; and we all know how, as a child, he sang for alms in the village street of Eisenach, and found a home with good Dame Ursula and her worthy husband. All through his life he retained his fondness for music, calling it “ one of the most beautiful and noble gifts of God, the best solace of man in sorrow ” ; and

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again terming it "a fair gift of God, and near allied to Divinity." Unlike Calvin, who put a ban upon music together with poetry and painting, Luther declared : "I would fain see all the arts, but especially music, employed in the service of Him who created them."

When he inaugurated the Reformation, congregational singing was all but extinct, and there were only fifty hymns in the German language. To these he added thirty-seven, and invited two celebrated choir-masters to assist him, keeping four printers busy in the work of printing and publishing. His most famous hymn is that known as "Ein feste Burg," composed while on his way to the Diet of Worms in 1521, and rendered into English by Thomas Carlyle in that beginning :

"A safe stronghold our God is still,
A trusty shield and weapon."

This stirring paraphrase of Psalm xli. has well been called "the Marseillaise of the Reformation," for it is still the great national hymn of Germany ; and the first line of the original is carved on the Reformer's tomb at Wittenberg. Coleridge says that "Luther did as much for the Reformation by his hymns as by his translation of the Bible" ; while a Romanist writer expresses much the same view, from an opposite standpoint, by declaring that "the hymns of Luther have destroyed more souls than his writings and sermons !"

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Luther, having led the way in providing congregational singing, was followed by a long line of writers, who caught his inspiration and prolonged the strain of sacred song. "Great God, what do I see and hear," which is generally called "Luther's hymn," was not written by him but by RINGWALDT, a Prussian pastor, in 1581 ; but the tune to which it is generally sung was perhaps composed by Luther. MICHAEL WEISSE, a contemporary of the famous Reformer, wrote "Christ the Lord is risen again," in 1531 ; and JOHANN SCHEFFLER (who was born in 1624 and died in 1677) has left us two fine hymns, "Thee will I love, my strength, my tower," and "O Love, who formedst me to wear."

MARTIN RINCKART, the village pastor of Eilenburg (who was born in 1586 and died in 1649), wrote one of our grandest Thanksgiving hymns under the following remarkable circumstances. The Thirty Years' War had devastated the surrounding country, and the village itself had been plundered and burnt. To add to the troubles of the survivors, pestilence had broken out among them, and the devoted pastor had sometimes to read the Burial Service over fifty persons in one day. One morning, as he sat in his study, he heard the sound of a trumpet, and saw a horseman gallop up the village street, with the people crowding round him. Fearful of some fresh disaster in store, he hurried out,

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only to learn, to his intense relief, that peace had been proclaimed. Returning to his room, he offered up a devout thanksgiving to God ; and then, opening his Bible, his eyes fell on the following passage from the Apocrypha : “ Now, therefore, bless ye the God of all, which only doeth wondrous things everywhere, which exalteth our days from the womb, and dealeth with us according to His mercies. He grant us joyfulness of heart, and that peace may be in our days in Israel for ever.” Sitting down at his writing-table, he composed the famous hymn, “ Now thank we all our God ” ; and, as he finished it, a suitable melody occurred to him, to which he at once sang the splendid words to the assembled multitude. The “ Nun Danket ” ever since has been the German “ Te Deum,” and it is incorporated by Mendelssohn in his immortal “ Hymn of Praise.”

The famous poet, TERSTEEGEN (who was born in 1697 and died in 1769), being at first almost a hermit, and then a travelling preacher, has given us, “ Lo, God is here ! let us adore,” and “ Thou hidden love of God ” ; both being translations by the Rev. John Wesley, who has also rendered into English many of COUNT ZINZENDORF’s beautiful hymns. This famous leader of the Moravian Brethren (who was born in 1700 and died in 1760) wrote some two thousand hymns in all, of which the following

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appear in our hymn books : “ Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness,” “ Jesu, still lead on till our rest be won,” “ O Thou, to whose all-searching sight,” and “ Christ will gather in His own.”

“ Who are these like stars appearing ? ” came from the pen of HEINRICH SCHENK in 1719 ; “ Jesus lives ! no longer now can thy terrors, Death, appal us,” was written by CHRISTIAN GELLERT in 1757 ; and “ We plough the fields, and scatter the good seed on the land,” by MATTHIAS CLAUDIUS in 1782. “ Christ receiveth sinful men ” was composed by NEUMEISTER in 1756, “ Now I have found the ground wherein sure my soul’s anchor may remain,” by J. A. ROTHE in 1725 ; while we owe the beautiful hymn beginning “ Oh let him whose sorrow no relief can find ” to HENRY SIGISMUND OSWALD, a Prussian Privy Councillor, who was born in 1751 and died in 1834.

Crossing the Atlantic Ocean in imagination, let us now glance at a few famous hymn writers from America, reserving the most prolific of them all—FANNY CROSBY—for consideration with her sister-songsters. DR. RAY PALMER, a Congregational minister, was born in 1808 and died in 1887. His most famous hymn : “ My faith looks up to Thee,” was written in 1831 (soon after he left Yale College), and has been translated into seven or eight languages. He also wrote : “ Jesu, these eyes have never seen that

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radiant Form of Thine," and "Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts;" the latter being, as we have already seen, a translation from Bernard of Clairvaux.

EDMUND H. SEARS, a Unitarian minister (who was born in 1810 and died in 1876), has, strange to say, given us one of our noblest Christmas hymns: "It came upon the midnight clear," which was composed in 1850; and BISHOP DOANE, of New Jersey (who was born in 1799 and died in 1859), wrote: "Thou art the way; by Thee alone from sin and death we flee," in the year 1824.

P. P. BLISS, the song-evangelist, and most prolific of male American hymn writers, was born in Pennsylvania in 1838, and died in a railway accident in 1876; having at first escaped uninjured, but losing his life in an effort to rescue his wife. In addition to the numerous hymns of which he was the author both of words and music, which we shall consider when we come to speak of tune composers, he wrote the words of the following which appear in "Sacred Songs and Solos": "I know not the hour when my Lord will come," "A long time I wandered in darkness and sin," "Though the way be sometimes dreary," "While the silv'ry moonbeams fall," "I will sing of my Redeemer," and "'Tis known in earth and heaven too."

Latin, Greek, German, American Hymns

To the REV. GEORGE DUFFIELD (an American Presbyterian minister) we owe the stirring hymn : “ Stand up, stand up for Jesus,” which was written in 1858. It was suggested to him by the words of a dying fellow-minister, who sent as his last message to the members of a Y.M.C.A., which he had addressed on the preceding Sunday : “ Tell them to stand up for Jesus.”

Surely the fact that so many of the hymns which we love to sing are of foreign extraction points to the glorious time foretold in Revelation vii. 9 ; when the “ new song ” shall be sung by those who have been redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

CHAPTER IV

HYMNS OF THE GREAT REVIVAL

WE saw, in our second chapter, that Christianity was born and nurtured amid Sacred Song, and so it naturally follows that each period of the revival or quickening of the spiritual life of the Church should be accompanied and assisted by the same means. We read in Psalm xl. 2, 3, that David said of God : “ He brought me up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God.”

In striking contrast to this, we have the sad wail of the Jews when they were captives in Babylon, recorded in Psalm cxxxvii. 1-4 : “ By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song ; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land ? ”

On the other hand we have the joyful exultation of the returned captives, expressed in Psalm cxxvi. 1, 2 : “ When the Lord turned again

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the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing."

What is true of the individual is also true of the Church as a whole ; the burden of unconfessed and unforgiven sin effectually silences " the Lord's song," but the experience of redeeming and restoring grace inspires " a new song " of grateful praise. So the stagnant periods of Church life have ever been songless ones, but " hymns and spiritual songs " have always accompanied times of spiritual revival. We saw, in our last chapter, that this was the case when the glorious Reformation dawned after the night of mediæval darkness ; we shall see, in this one, that the same happened when the great Revival of the eighteenth century awoke the slumbering Church ; and we shall find, in future chapters, that the same was true of the subsequent Anglican revival, and of the great Evangelistic enterprises of Moody and Sankey, Torrey and Alexander, and others.

In Germany, we have seen how Romish superstitions fled before the Gospel in song, and the priests bitterly complained that the whole nation was " singing itself into the Lutheran doctrine " ; but in England the spirit of Calvinism rather than Lutheranism was long dominant, and singing was regarded as a carnal rather than a spiritual exercise. The famous Genevan re-

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former held that the words sung in church should be taken from Holy Scripture alone, and hence for many generations metrical versions of the Psalms and paraphrases of Scripture were practically the only hymns used in public worship. In the reign of Edward VI, a selection of 19 Psalms in metre was published in London, the author being THOMAS STERNHOLD, groom of the robes to the young king, who died in 1549; and these were increased to 37 at the time of his death. Then JOHN HOPKINS, a schoolmaster and clergyman in Suffolk, took up the work; and additions by himself and others led to the publication in 1562 of a complete edition; the title-page stating that they were "set forth and allowed to be sung in all churches of all the people before and after Morning and Evening Prayer, as also before and after sermons, and moreover in private houses for their godly solace and comfort, laying apart all ungodly songs and ballads, which tend only to the nourishing of vices and corrupting of youth."

These psalms were more remarkable for their quaint expressions than for their literary merit, and showed that the piety of the authors was superior to their poetry; thus Psalm vii. 15. is versified as follows:

" He digged a ditch, and delved it deep,
In hope to hurt his brother;
But he has fall'n into the pit
That he digged up for t'other!"

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Yet one of these metrical psalms, at least, has attained undying fame, the grand "Old Hundredth;" which was composed in 1560 by the REV. WILLIAM KETHE, then chaplain to the British forces at Havre, and afterwards a clergyman in Dorset. One hymn was appended to this collection of psalms, and it is thus probably the oldest English one in existence: "O Lord, turn not Thy face from me," which was written by the REV. JOHN MARCHANT, also in 1560. One of our most beautiful "New Jerusalem" hymns, "Jerusalem, my happy home," seems to date from this period. The original manuscript, deposited in the British Museum, is headed "A Song made by F. B. P. to the tune of Diana"; and the initials are probably those of FRANCIS BAKER PORTER, a Roman Catholic priest, who was imprisoned in the Tower of London during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. It consists of 26 verses, full of quaint beauty and fervent aspiration, so that our familiar hymn is an adaptation and condensation.

JOHN MILTON, the greatest of Christian poets, has only left us one familiar hymn: "Let us, with a gladsome mind, praise the Lord, for He is kind," which is an adaptation of Psalm cxxxvi; but it is remarkable as giving promise of his future fame, for he was only 15 years old when he wrote it in 1623.

Sternhold and Hopkins' version of the Psalms

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was succeeded by that of TATE and BRADY, published in 1696. Both were poor Irishmen, often in debt, and the former was addicted to habits of intemperance ; but, through influence exerted on his behalf, he became Poet Laureate. Their version was a decided improvement upon the previous one, and several of those metrical psalms are still in use, such as : “ As pants the hart for cooling streams,” “ Through all the changing scenes of life,” “ Have mercy, Lord, on me,” and “ Ye boundless realms of joy.” The familiar Christmas hymn : “ While shepherds watched their flocks by night,” is a Scriptural paraphrase from the Supplement issued in 1703.

JOSEPH ADDISON, the greatest of essayists, and master of English prose, was born in 1672 and died in 1719. He was the son of a clergyman, and was himself destined for the ministry of the Church of England ; but he became the editor of the “ Spectator,” whose pages he enriched with many beautiful poems, some of which have found their way into most hymn-books. The three best-known are : “ The Lord my pasture shall prepare,” “ The spacious firmament on high,” and “ When all Thy mercies, O my God,” which all appeared during the year 1712. The dying words of the famous litterateur were : “ See in what peace a Christian can die,” and they give a good idea of his piety.

Almost all the hymns which we have considered

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so far have been metrical versions of the Psalms ; and, notwithstanding the beauty of many of them, most of us will doubtless agree with Samuel Wesley, when he wrote :

“ Let David’s pure, unaltered lays
Transmit through ages down
To Thee, O David’s Lord, our praise,
To Thee, O David’s Son.”

We now come to speak of one whom Lord Selborne has called “ the father of English hymns,” this title also being carved on his tomb in Abney Park. ISAAC WATTS was born in 1674, at Southampton, and died in 1748 ; his father being a staunch Nonconformist, deacon of an Independent chapel, who had been twice imprisoned for his religious convictions. Isaac was a very precocious child, beginning to learn Latin at four years of age, and mastering both it, Greek, Hebrew, and French ere he was fourteen ! When only eight years old, he won a prize for an original verse with the saucy couplet :

“ I write not for a farthing, but to try
How I your farthing writers can outvie.”

He was converted at 15 years of age, and a year later went up to London to study for the Congregational ministry, returning in four years’ time to complete his training at home. Feeling dissatisfied with the rude rhymes of Sternhold and Hopkins, and Tate and Brady, which were all that the congregation sang, he complained to his father ; and, when the latter sharply retorted :

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“ Give us something better, young man ! ” he accepted the challenge, and produced the hymn commencing :

“ Behold the glories of the Lamb,
Amidst His Father’s Throne ;
Prepare new honours for His Name,
And songs before unknown.”

This was sung on the following Sunday by the congregation, a line at a time being read to them, and for the next two years he produced a new hymn for each Lord’s Day. Going up to London to take charge of an Independent chapel there, he published in 1707 his first collection of 222 hymns, entitled : “ Hymns and Spiritual Songs ” ; in the preface to which he says : “ I have borrowed the sense, and much of the form, from some particular portions of Scripture, and have paraphrased most of the doxologies in the New Testament that contain anything in them peculiarly evangelical, also many parts of the Old Testament that have reference to the times of the Messiah.”

These hymns were such innovations that they were humorously described as “ Watts’ whims,” but many have become immortal. Taking them in the order in which they appear to have been written, the earliest were : “ When I survey the wondrous Cross,” which Matthew Arnold accounted the finest hymn in the English language ; “ Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,” “ Come, let us join our cheerful songs,” “ How

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beauteous are their feet," "Come, ye that love the Lord," "When I can read my title clear," and "There is a land of pure delight," all of which appeared in 1707. The last was written ere he was twenty-one, and was originally entitled : "A prospect of Heaven makes death easy" ; and it has undoubtedly cheered many a death-bed. It is remarkable for its striking and appropriate expressions, such as "pure delight," "infinite day," "gloomy doubts," "unbeclouded eyes," "everlasting spring," and "never-withering flowers;" while the couplet :

"Sweet fields, beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dressed in living green,"

is said to have been suggested to his mind by the pleasing view across Southampton Water to the green glades of the New Forest.

In the year 1709 the following well-known hymns appeared : "Not all the blood of beasts," "How bright those glorious spirits shine," "Welcome, sweet day of rest," "We give immortal praise," "Salvation, oh, the joyful sound," "Join all the glorious names," and "Give me the wings of faith to rise" ; while in 1719, the following were published : "O God, our help in ages past," "Lord of the worlds above," "This is the day the Lord hath made," 'Before Jehovah's awful throne," "From all that dwell below the skies," "I'll praise my Maker with my breath," "Sweet is the work, my God,

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my King," and "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun."

This last well-known missionary hymn has an interesting circumstance connected with its use. On Whit-Sunday, 1862, the King of Tonga, one of the South Sea Islands, adopted a Christian form of government, and gave his people a proper constitution. On that day, accordingly, five thousand of the natives assembled for Divine worship, and commenced the service by singing this hymn ; but, as they remembered their recent rescue from the unutterable cruelties of heathendom, the song died away in sobs. In all, this prolific writer composed more than seven hundred hymns, but we must reserve our consideration of those which he wrote for children to another chapter.

We now come to the king of hymn writers, the REV. CHARLES WESLEY, who wrote about six thousand five hundred hymns in all ; he and his more famous brother, John, publishing no fewer than thirteen volumes of their compositions and translations, the latter chiefly from the German. Charles was the youngest of a family of 18 children, towards whose support only a small income was available ; and a wealthy nobleman, who was their kinsman, offered to adopt him. This being declined, a substitute was found in the person of another youth, who became the grandfather of the great Duke of Wellington, whose

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original title of Marquis of Wellesley was an older form of the name Wesley. Charles Wesley was born in 1707 and died in 1788, his father being rector of Epworth, and himself a hymn writer. He was educated at Westminster School, and then had the advantage of nine years' residence at Christ Church, Oxford ; where he joined a band of earnest students, which included George Whitefield, afterwards the great preacher of the Evangelical Revival. Their habits of systematic study and religious devotion earned for them the nickname of "Methodists," though they were at the time High Churchmen !

Charles and John Wesley went out as missionaries to Georgia, in North America ; and there came under the influence of some Moravian Brethren, who led them into the full light of Gospel truth. Returning to England, they threw themselves heart and soul into the great Evangelical Revival, which had been inaugurated by the preaching of Whitefield ; and engaged with him in open-air preaching, with the object of breaking through the indifference which hung like a pall over the mass of the people.

Most of Charles Wesley's hymns were composed on horseback, as he travelled from place to place ; and he carried small cards with him wherever he went, on which to jot down the lines which came to his mind. One day his horse threw him, and rolled over him, bruising

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his leg, spraining his hand, and stunning him for a time ; and the quaint note appears in his diary : “ This spoiled my making hymns till the next day ! ”

The following are the most famous of Charles Wesley's hymns, in the order of the dates of their composition. The year 1739 witnessed the birth of the noble Christmas hymn : “ Hark, the herald angels sing ” ; the beautiful Easter one, beginning, “ Christ the Lord is risen to-day,” and the fine Ascension one : “ Hail the day that sees Him rise.” The following year produced : “ Christ, Whose glory fills the skies,” “ Jesus, we Thy promise claim,” “ Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing,” “ Weary of wandering from my God,” and the most famous of them all, “ Jesu, lover of my soul.”

Concerning this universal favourite, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher said : “ I would rather have written that hymn than have the fame of all the kings who ever sat on this earth. That hymn will go on singing till the Last Trump brings forth the angel band, and then I think it will mount up on some lip to the very presence of God.”

An interesting story is told of the origin of this matchless hymn. One evening the two Wesleys were holding an open-air service, when they were attacked by a furious mob, and forced to fly for their lives. Wounded by a shower of stones, they took refuge in a neighbouring barn ;

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and Charles, hammering a bit of lead into the shape of a pencil, wrote the lines on the inspiration of the moment. Many beautiful anecdotes are told in connection with its use, but we have only time to notice two.

In the middle of last century, during a furious gale in the Bristol Channel, the captain and crew of a ship were forced to take to the boats as a last venture. They were all drowned, but the ship itself was afterwards discovered wedged between two rocks ; and in the cabin the captain's hymn-book was found open at this page, with the first four lines underscored in pencil. Another vessel took fire in the English Channel, and a mother with her child at her breast was picked up, clinging to a spar ; the attention of the crew of a passing steamer being directed to her by hearing the same familiar words being sung by her.

In the year 1741 Wesley composed : " Our Lord is risen from the dead," and " Sinners turn, why will ye die ? " ; in 1742 he wrote : " Oh, for a heart to praise my God," and " Jesu, my strength, my hope " ; in 1744 : " Come, Thou long-expected Jesus," and " Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim " ; and in 1745 : " Head of the Church Triumphant," and " Lamb of God, Whose bleeding Love we now recall to mind." His later hymns include : " O Love Divine, how sweet Thou art," " Love Divine, all loves

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excelling," and "Rejoice, the Lord is King," all composed in 1746 ; "Forth in Thy Name, O Lord, I go," "Soldiers of Christ, arise," and "Leader of faithful souls," all written in 1749 ; "Blow ye the trumpet, blow," in 1755 ; and "Come let us join our friends above," and "Lo, He comes with clouds descending," in 1759.

Charles Wesley lived to the ripe age of 81, and was buried in Marylebone churchyard ; for he said : "I have lived and I die in the communion of the Church of England, and I will be buried in the churchyard of my parish church." He was the author of the famous saying : "God buries His workmen, but carries on His work," and the words are engraved on his mural tablet in Westminster Abbey. A striking illustration of the truth of the adage is afforded in his own family ; his two sons and grandson all becoming eminent organists and composers, and one of the former, Samuel, played the organ when he was only three years old, and composed an oratorio on "Ruth" at the age of eight !

Three of Wesley's contemporaries have each produced at least one famous hymn.

JOHN CENNICK was born in 1718, and died in 1755 ; and to him we owe : "Children of the Heavenly King," "Brethren, let us join to bless," and the familiar Grace before and after food,

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“ Be present at our table, Lord, “ We thank Thee, Lord, for this our food.”

THOMAS OLIVERS was born in 1725, and died in 1799 ; being only a humble shoemaker, yet having composed one of the noblest hymns in our language. The poet Montgomery said of “ The God of Abraham praise ” : “ There is not in our language a lyric of more majestic style, more elevated thought, or more glorious imagery.” Before his conversion he had lived a very godless life, and had often ridiculed Whitefield in the tap-rooms of public-houses ; but one day, going out of curiosity to hear the famous preacher at Bristol, he was arrested by a sermon preached from the text, “ Is not this a brand plucked from the burning ? ” Joining the Methodists, he became a travelling preacher under the Wesleys, and one horse carried him 100,000 miles in 25 years. His famous hymn (composed in 1770) is a free rendering in metrical form of the thirteen articles of the Jewish creed, adapted to an old Hebrew air which he had heard sung in a synagogue.

TO EDWARD PERRONET (who was born in 1726 and died in 1792) belongs the honour of composing that grand coronation hymn of the Christian Church : “ All hail the power of Jesu’s Name,” which first appeared in 1780. It was published without signature in “ The Gospel Magazine,” the original version of eight verses

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being preserved in the British Museum ; and the well-known tune "Miles Lane" was written for it by William Shrubsole. It is recorded that when Billy Dawson (a famous Methodist preacher) was once discoursing on the various offices of Christ, he went on to describe a coronation ; and, marshalling before the minds of his auditors the grand procession of redeemed patriarchs, prophets, kings, apostles, martyrs, and confessors of every age, concluded by singing in triumphant tones the first verse of this hymn. The crowded congregation was electrified, and, springing to their feet as one man, sang it all through with thrilling effect.

Perronet was the travelling companion of Charles Wesley, who called him " the Archbishop of the Methodists," and he afterwards became the pastor of one of Lady Huntingdon's chapels.

WILLIAM WILLIAMS (who was born in 1717 and died in 1791) has been called " the Welsh Wesley," for he travelled on an average three thousand miles a year for half a century. His two most famous hymns are : " O'er the gloomy hills of darkness," and " Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah," which both appeared in 1772—the latter in leaflet form, headed : " A favourite hymn, sung by Lady Huntingdon's young collegians, printed by the desire of many Christian friends ; Lord, give it Thy blessing "—a prayer which has been abundantly answered.

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It is said to have been composed after he had lost himself in the darkness in a Welsh valley, and prayed for guidance ; and, as he knelt, he saw the light of a distant cottage through the trees.

We now come to speak of the great religious opponent of the Wesleys, the REV. A. M. TOPLADY ; for, while they preached Arminian doctrine, he was a stern Calvinist.

The bitter controversy has happily long since died away ; and the famous hymn of Toplady's, " Rock of ages, cleft for me," not only finds a place to-day in every Wesleyan hymn book, but its authorship was once ascribed by an eminent member of that body to Charles Wesley himself ! It first appeared in " The Gospel Magazine " for March, 1776, being headed, " A living and dying prayer for the holiest believer in the world " ; and it was originally aimed at the supposed Perfectionism taught by the Wesleys. It was prefaced by a quotation from an article which had been written on the National Debt, showing how long it would take to count if it was in shillings, and how many miles the coins would reach if placed side by side. This Toplady followed up by an article five times as long as the quotation, showing how Christ had paid all the debt of the Church at large, and ending with the famous verses.

The hymn is said to have been composed while the author was sheltering from a violent

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thunder-storm between two massive piers of limestone rock in Berrington Coombe, a rocky glen which runs up into the heart of the Mendip Hills.

Its universal popularity cannot be attributed to its perfection of poetical form, for it contains some bad rhymes and much confusion of metaphor ; but one might as well pull a rose to pieces to find where the scent comes from, as try to analyse this beautiful hymn !

It was a great favourite with the husband of Queen Victoria, who often repeated it during his last illness ; and it has soothed the death-beds of thousands of believers in humbler ranks of life. It has been translated into many languages, Mr. Gladstone having rendered it into Italian, Greek, and Latin ; and Dr. Pomeroy tells us that he heard one of these versions sung by a weeping congregation of Armenians in Constantinople.

When an Australian vessel, called the "Draper," foundered some years ago in the Bay of Biscay, the last man rescued stated that he left the remainder of the passengers singing this hymn in full view of their watery grave ; an incident that has had many more recent parallels.

Toplady was born in 1740, and died 38 years later of rapid consumption. His father, a major in the British army, was killed soon after his birth ; and he himself wore himself out prematurely by his arduous labours in preaching

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and writing ; having been well compared to a race-horse, all fire and nerves ! He was converted when 16 years old by the preaching of an illiterate layman in a barn in Ireland, and eventually became vicar of Broad Hembury, in Devonshire. He wrote in all 133 hymns, of which the other best-known ones are : “ Your harps, ye trembling saints, down from the willows take,” and “ When languor and disease invade this trembling house of clay.”

Another career of still greater promise was cut short by the same dread disease at a much earlier age. HENRY KIRKE WHITE (born in 1785) was the son of a Nottingham butcher, and was designed for that prosaic trade ; but his mother, a woman of superior education, got him placed in an attorney's office. From early years he manifested a great gift for poetry, composing his first poem when 13 years of age, and publishing a volume when only 17. He distinguished himself by his knowledge of Latin, Greek, French, Italian and Spanish ; and taught himself astronomy, chemistry, drawing and music. Through the assistance of the Rev. Charles Simeon and the Rev. Henry Martyn, he entered Cambridge University to study for the ministry ; but died in the third year of his residence in 1806. The first ten lines of the famous hymn, “ Oft in danger, oft in woe,” were found written on the back of one of his mathematical exercises,

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and the hymn was afterwards completed by Miss Maitland.

We now come to speak, in conclusion, of two writers who were joint authors of the famous Olney Hymns (published in 1799), which have greatly enriched our store of English sacred song. WILLIAM COWPER was born in 1731, and his mother died when he was only 6 years old ; yet his exquisite lines, " On the receipt of my mother's picture," written 53 years later, are among the choicest productions of his fertile pen. Originally trained for the Bar, he eventually became Clerk of the Journals in the House of Lords ; but, unhappily, a constitutional tendency to insanity manifested itself, and he soon had to relinquish the post. His malady subjected him to acute fits of mental depression, with occasional attempts at suicide, and he had to spend a year and a half at an asylum kept by Dr. Nathaniel Cotton.

Cowper attributes his conversion in 1764 to reading Romans iii. 25 : " Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His Blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God " ; and thus describes the effect upon his feelings : " The Lord was pleased to reveal Himself in His Word, and the full beams of the Sun of Righteousness shone upon me. I saw the sufficiency of the atonement Christ had made, my pardon sealed with His

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Blood, and all the fulness and completeness of His justification. In a moment I believed, and received the Gospel ; unless the Almighty arm had been under me, I think I should have died with gratitude and joy. For many succeeding weeks, tears were ready to flow if I did but speak of the Gospel, or mention the name of Jesus. To rejoice day and night was all my employment ; too happy to sleep much, I thought it was lost time that was spent in slumber.”

Cowper spent two years at Huntingdon at the rectory of the Rev. Morley Unwin, which proved a true home for him till the Rector was killed by a fall from his horse ; and then the Rev. John Newton invited him to Olney, where for 13 years he lived in an adjoining house, and was in almost hourly intercourse with the famous preacher. He spent a great part of his time in reading the Bible, but unhappily never recovered fully from his constitutional tendency to insanity, and had for a time to return to the asylum.

It may seem strange that one whose writings have brought peace and joy to countless hearts should have been himself subject to fits of gloom and despondency, but it was just because he knew all the saddest experiences of the heart that he was able to put so powerfully into verse the Christian's conflicts and comforts. Out of the sixty-eight hymns which he contributed to the famous Olney collection, the following are

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the best known : “ Jesus, where’er Thy people meet,” said to have been written for the first Prayer Meeting at Olney in 1769 ; “ Hark, my soul, it is the Lord,” composed in 1771 ; “ There is a Fountain filled with Blood,” written in 1772 ; “ God moves in a mysterious way,” composed in 1774 ; “ God of my life, to Thee I call,” “ What various hindrances we meet,” “ The Spirit breathes upon the Word,” and “ Oh, for a closer walk with God,” all written in 1779 ; and “ Sometimes a light surprises the Christian while he sings,” in 1796.

The last-named was composed when he had recovered from his final attack of insanity, but the famous hymn on God’s Providence is associated with one of his earlier ones. He conceived the idea that God willed him to drown himself in a particular part of the river Ouse, and told his coachman to drive him thither ; but, either accidentally or purposely, the driver missed the way and landed the poet back at his own door. Cowper afterwards wrote the familiar lines, entitling them, “ Light shining out of darkness ” ; and it is recorded that, during the Lancashire Cotton Famine in 1865, the hymn was sung by the operatives at a mill, and proved prophetic, for work was soon afterwards resumed in full swing.

The equally well-known hymn on Redemption is evidently based on the text which was the means

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of the author's conversion, and few hymns have done so much for the conversion of sinners and the comfort of saints, with its memories of the Cross and anticipation of the crown. It shows the humility of one of England's greatest poets to write of "this poor, lisping, stammering tongue"; for such pieces as "The Task," and "Truth," are among the most exquisite gems of our literature.

Cowper died in the year 1800, and the following lines are inscribed on his tomb :

"England, exulting in his spotless fame,
Ranks with her dearest sons his favourite name ;
Sense, fancy, wit, suffice not all to raise
So clear a title to affection's praise ;
His highest honours to his heart belong,
His virtues formed the magic of his song."

Cowper's friend and fellow-worker, the REV. JOHN NEWTON, was born six years earlier and died seven years later. His long and eventful life was full of desperate deeds and hair-breadth escapes in his early years, and of unwearied labours in the Master's service in his later life. He lost his mother when only seven years of age, and copied his father's example by adopting a sea-faring career ; but, though born of pious parents, he was a wild and reckless youth, and became the captain of a slave ship and a hardened sinner.

When he was 24 years of age he wrote in his diary : "I began to know that there is a God who hears and answers prayer" ; and experienced a change of heart while passing through a

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hurricane. Soon afterwards he gave up the slave trade, and entered the ministry of the Church of England in 1764 ; becoming acquainted with the poet Cowper while vicar of Olney, as we have already seen.

The hymns of which they were joint authors were composed for a weekly Prayer Meeting held at the Earl of Dartmouth's house ; and, of the two hundred and eighty which Newton contributed, the best known are : " And dost Thou say, Ask what thou wilt ? ", " Approach, my soul, the mercy seat," " Come, my soul, thy suit prepare," " Begone unbelief, my Saviour is near," " Great Shepherd of Thy people, hear," " Now, gracious Lord, Thine arm reveal," " How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear," " Why should I fear the darkest hour ? " " Quiet, Lord, my froward heart," " May the grace of Christ our Saviour," " One there is, above all others, well deserves the name of Friend," " Glorious things of Thee are spoken," " For mercies, countless as the sands," and " In evil long I took delight," all of which appeared in 1779. The last-named is a record in verse of his spiritual biography, and it is well borne out by the epitaph in St. Mary's Church, Woolnoth, London, written by himself : " John Newton, Clerk, once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, preserved,

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restored and pardoned, and appointed to preach the Faith he had long laboured to destroy.”

Newton was, indeed, on fire with the passion of love for souls, was the means of the conversion of Scott, the Commentator (who succeeded him at Olney), helpful spiritually to Hannah More and William Wilberforce, and one of the founders of the Church Missionary Society. He was Rector of Woolnoth for twenty-eight years, drawing crowded and influential congregations ; and, when he reached his eightieth year, and was urged to cease preaching, he replied ; “ What, shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak ? ” He wrote : “ Let me not be silent from the praise of that Grace which could pardon, that Blood which could expiate, such sins as mine. Yea, the Ethiopian may change his skin, and the leopard his spots, since I, who was the willing slave of every evil, possessed with a legion of unclean spirits, have been spared, and saved, and changed, to stand as a monument of His Almighty Power for ever.”

Newton tells us that all his hymns were the fruit of his own experience ; and they certainly afford excellent examples of what he declared all such compositions should be ; for he wrote : “ Perspicacity, simplicity, and ease should be chiefly attended to ; and the imagery and colouring of poetry, if admitted at all, should be indulged in very sparingly, and with great judgment.”

CHAPTER V

HYMN WRITERS OF THE PAST CENTURY

WE now come to deal with hymn writers who have lived during the past hundred years, and must speak first of the REV. THOMAS KELLY, who, though born in 1769, did not die till 1854. He was the son of an Irish judge, and was at first destined for the Bar; but an earnest study of Holy Scripture made him take up very serious religious views, which subjected him to much persecution from his relatives. He was ordained as a clergyman of the Church of Ireland, but, finding it too strait for him, he became an Independent minister. He was a most prolific writer, composing no fewer than seven hundred and sixty-five hymns, of which the following are the best known : "On the mountain's top appearing," and "From Egypt's bondage come," both written in 1802; "Come, see the place where Jesus lay," and "We've no abiding city here," both composed in 1804; "Through the day Thy love has spared us," in 1806; "Look, ye saints, the sight is glorious," in 1809; "We sing the praise of Him who died," in 1815; and "The Head that once was crowned with thorns," and "Speed Thy servants, Saviour, speed them," both written in 1820.

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THE REV. HENRY FRANCIS LYTE, one of our most famous hymn writers, was born at Kelso, on the classic river Tweed, in 1793; and, as an undergraduate at Cambridge, thrice gained the prize for English verse. He had been ordained for some years ere he experienced a change of heart, and was converted through being called upon to attend the death-bed of a neighbouring clergyman. Both being equally ignorant of the grace of God, they searched the Scriptures together, and both found salvation. He writes: "He died happy under the belief that, though he had deeply erred, there was One whose death and sufferings would atone for his delinquencies, and he accepted that for all that he had incurred. I was greatly affected by the whole matter, and was brought to look at life and its issues with a different eye than before. I began to study my Bible, and preach in another manner than I had previously done."

For twenty-five years Lyte was the vicar of Lower Brixham in Devonshire, and most of his hymns were written for the fisherfolk of his parish, and for his eight hundred Sunday scholars. The best known are: "Jesus, I my cross have taken," composed in 1825; "Pleasant are Thy courts above," "Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven," and "God of mercy, God of grace," all written in 1834; and the ever-popular "Abide with me," composed a few months before his

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death, in 1847. This matchless evening hymn is unequalled for deep pathos, impassioned earnestness, ardent affection, and joyful exultation; and a knowledge of the circumstances under which it was written not only adds to its interest, but is essential to its right understanding.

Lyte's health had always been weak, for his brilliant intellect was enshrined in a feeble body, but his favourite saying was: "It is better to wear out than to rust out." At this period he was worn out with work and worry, and his doctor ordered him to the South of France. He wrote to a friend at the time: "The swallows are preparing for flight, and inviting me to accompany them; and yet, alas, while I talk of flying, I am just able to crawl." Though so feeble, he preached a valedictory sermon and administered the Holy Communion on his last Sunday; afterwards remaining for some time alone in his study. When he emerged, he handed a relative the hymn which he had just composed; and, soon afterwards, went to Nice, where he died two months later with the words, "Peace! Joy!" on his lips. In one of his latest poems, entitled "Declining Days," he wrote :

" Oh, might I leave behind
Some blessing for my fellows, some fair trust
To guide, to cheer, to elevate my kind,
When I was in the dust ;

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Death would be sweeter then,
More calm my slumber 'neath the silent sod,
Might I thus live to bless my fellow men,
And glorify my God.
O Thou, whose touch can lend
Life to the dead, Thy quick'ning grace supply ;
And grant me, swan-like, my last breath to spend
In song that may not die. "

and, surely, this request has been abundantly answered in the immortality of his famous Evening hymn !

TO SIR ROBERT GRANT, Governor of Bombay, we owe the following familiar hymns : " When gath'ring clouds around I view," written in 1806; " O worship the King, all glorious above," composed in 1833; and " Saviour, when in dust to Thee," written in 1815.

To another eminent layman, JOSEPH ANSTICE, Professor of Classics in King's College, London (who was born in 1808 and died in 1836), we are indebted for " Father, by Thy love and power," " O Lord, how happy should we be," and " Lord of the harvest, once again."

Few hymn writers have attained the popularity of JAMES MONTGOMERY, the Christian poet, who was born in 1771 and died in 1854. His poetic spirit was first stirred when (as a schoolboy) he heard his master read some extracts from Blair's poem, " The Grave," as he and his fellow pupils sat under a hedge; though all but he fell asleep under the process ! He was being educated at the Moravian Seminary at Fulneck, near

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Leeds ; and both his parents went out as missionaries to the West Indies when he was twelve years old, dying there a few years later.

On leaving school, Montgomery was successively apprenticed to a chandler and a draper; but subsequently entered a Sheffield newspaper office, and eventually became editor of the *Iris*. He was twice imprisoned in York Castle for seditious libel, but the Government cheered his later life by giving him a pension of £200 per annum; and at his death he received the honour of a public funeral, a statue being afterwards erected to his memory.

Before he was fourteen, Montgomery composed a heroic poem, 1,000 lines in length, and he ranks high among our national poets; but it is by his hymns that he will chiefly be remembered. He wrote some four hundred in all, of which about a quarter are still in use, the most familiar being: "Command Thy blessing from above," composed in 1816; "Oh, where shall rest be found?" and "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire," written in 1818; "Hail to the Lord's Anointed," composed in 1822; "O Spirit of the living God," in 1823; "Pour out Thy Spirit from on high," "Go to dark Gethsemane," "Songs of praise the angels sang," "Stand up and bless the Lord," and "According to Thy gracious word," all written in 1825; "To Thy temple I repair," in 1828; "Palms of glory,

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raiment bright," in 1829; "Sow in the morn thy seed," in 1832; "For ever with the Lord," in 1835; "How shall a contrite spirit pray?" in 1840; "Come to the morning prayer," in 1842; "Lift up your heads, ye gates of brass," in 1843; and "Sing we the song of those who stand," in 1846.

The grand missionary hymn: "Hail to the Lord's Anointed," was recited by the poet at a meeting in Pitt Street Chapel, Liverpool; and it was first published in Dr. Adam Clarke's commentary, he presiding on that occasion, and begging for permission to do so. "Sow in the morn thy seed" was composed for one of the Whitsuntide Sunday School Festivals, for which the North of England is so famous.

The REV. ISAAC WILLIAMS, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, and Rector of Risley, was born in 1802 and died in 1865. He translated from the Latin original the hymn beginning, "Disposer supreme," and composed: "Lord, in this Thy mercy's day," "O heavenly Jerusalem," "Morn of morns, and day of days," and "Great Mover of all hearts."

The REV. DR. MONSELL was born at Londonderry in 1811, and died in 1875 as the result of some stone work falling upon his head from the roof of his parish church at Egham, Surrey, while it was being restored. His best known hymn is "Fight the good fight," which is a great

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favourite with English and American soldiers, though, of course, it deals exclusively with the "good fight of faith." He also wrote: "Rest of the weary," "Lord of the living harvest," "I hunger and I thirst," "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness," and "Sinful, sighing to be blest."

We now come to the chief hymn-writer from over the Border, DR. HORATIUS BONAR, who was born in 1808, and died in 1889. His ancestors for many generations were ministers of the Established Church of Scotland, but at the Disruption he followed Dr. Guthrie and Dr. Chalmers in their secession to the Free Church, becoming Moderator of the General Assembly in 1883. It is remarkable that while, until recent years, only Metrical Psalms were sung in the Free Church of Scotland, Christian congregations all over the world were singing his beautiful hymns with pleasure and profit. He began writing them when he was superintendent of a Sabbath school in Leith, for which he composed: "I lay my sins on Jesus," and "I was a wandering sheep," in 1843; also writing "Go, labour on; spend and be spent," in the same year for the teachers; while "A few more years shall roll" was composed for New Year's Day, 1844. Then followed: "The Church has waited long," in 1845; "I heard the voice of Jesus say," in 1846; "Thy way, not mine, O Lord," in 1856;

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“ Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face,” in 1857; “ I hear the words of love,” in 1864; “ No, not despairingly come I to Thee,” and “ When the weary, seeking rest,” in 1867. The latter is based upon Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the Temple, and was composed to fit one of Mendelssohn’s melodies.

“ Yet there is room ” was one of Bonar’s latest hymns, and was written for Mr. Sankey when he came over with Mr. Moody for evangelistic work in 1874. Sankey had composed his famous tune to fit Guinevere’s lament, commencing, “ Late, late, so late, and dark the night, and chill ”; but, being prevented by the owners of Tennyson’s copyright from using the words, he applied to Dr. Bonar for some verses on the same theme.

Some of his hymns were composed while travelling by train, and some while sitting by his own fireside at night; but all are marked by the same striking combination of childlike simplicity of expression, grace of style, and true evangelical fervour. Dr. Bonar left instructions that no memoir of himself should be written, doubtless to fulfil his own aspiration, so beautifully expressed in the following lines :

“ My name, and my place, and my tomb, all forgotten ;
The brief race of Time well and patiently run ;
So let me pass away, peacefully, silently ;
Only remembered by what I have done.”

Surely, what he has done for Church Hymnody

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will cause his name to be ever cherished in grateful remembrance, even apart from his excellent prose writings; the most famous of which, "God's Way of Peace," almost immediately attained a circulation of 285,000 copies.

Coming now to the period of the Tractarian Movement, which has had such a remarkable influence upon the modern history of the Church of England, let us first deal with the REV. JOHN KEEBLE, who did for it what Charles Wesley had done for the Evangelical Revival, sang it into the hearts of the people. He was born in 1792, his father being a clergyman, and his mother the daughter of one; and he died in 1866. Taking a distinguished degree at Oxford University—a "double first" in classics and mathematics—when 18 years of age, he became a Fellow of Oriel College ere he was 19. When he was 20 years old, he carried off the Chancellor's prizes for English and Latin Essays; and in 1831 he was elected Professor of Poetry at the University, combining the post with the living of Hursley in Hampshire.

Though living in such a quiet sphere, he exercised a vast influence in his day and generation, and wrote eight of the celebrated "Tracts for the Times." His great life-work, however, was "The Christian Year;" which was first published in 1827, and ran through 96 editions in his lifetime. It contains lyrics for every

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Sunday and Holy Day in the Church's year, and is a valuable devotional companion in verse to the Prayer Book. Dr. Arnold said: "Nothing equal to them exists in our language. The wonderful knowledge of Scripture, the purity of heart and richness of poetry which they exhibit I never saw equalled"; while Bishop Barry wrote: "It is a book which leads the soul up to God, not through one but through all of the various faculties which He has implanted in it."

Keble was very unwilling to publish "The Christian Year," and only did so at the earnest request of Coleridge, Whateley, and other friends; and he struck the key-note of the book by putting the words of Isaiah xxx. 15 on the title-page: "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."

The hymns are, on the whole, more suited for private devotion than for public worship; yet many have been incorporated in the hymn books of all denominations, and realize the author's own simile :

"As for some dear, familiar strain,
Untired we ask, and ask again;
Ever, in its melodious store,
Finding a spell unheard before."

The opening lyrics, headed "Morning" and "Evening," supply us with three of our best-known hymns; but the two first are robbed of much of their significance by being divorced from their original surroundings. "New every

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morning is the love" is introduced by five stanzas, of which the last reads :

" Oh, timely happy, timely wise,
Hearts that with rising morn arise !
Eyes that the beam celestial view,
Which evermore makes all things new."

" Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear," has two beautiful introductory stanzas:

" 'Tis gone, that bright and orbèd blaze,
Fast fading from our wistful gaze ;
Yon mantling cloud has hid from sight
The last faint pulse of quivering light.

In darkness, and in weariness,
The traveller on his way must press ;
No gleam to watch on tree or tower,
Whiling away the lonesome hour."

This same Evening poem has also supplied us with the hymn for our Rulers, beginning: " Thou Framer of the light and dark," with the addition of a suitable Doxology. The poem for Septuagesima Sunday provides us with the familiar lines beginning: " There is a Book who runs may read "; and that for the Fourth Sunday after Easter with the less known, but still more beautiful hymn commencing:

" My Saviour, can it ever be
That I should gain by losing Thee ? "

The lyric for Whit Sunday has given us, " When God of old came down from Heaven," and that for the Purification of the Virgin Mary the sweet hymn: " Blest are the pure in heart,"

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though only two of the original verses out of seventeen appear in our hymn books. In 1846, Keble, who was never married, wrote "Lyra Innocentium," or "Thoughts in verse for Christian children"; but none of these is well known. The familiar hymn for Rogation Days: "Lord, in Thy Name Thy servants plead," was not composed till 1856; and the still better known marriage hymn: "The voice that breathed o'er Eden," not till 1857. Keble was an earnest soul-winner, and one of his sayings was: "The salvation of one soul is worth more than the framing of the Magna Charta of a thousand worlds."

His great friend, NEWMAN, next claims our attention, though he parted from him in 1845 to join the Church of Rome, of which he was made a Cardinal in 1879. He was born in 1801, and educated at Ealing, and Trinity College, Oxford, where he graduated with third-class honours; subsequently becoming Fellow, and afterwards Tutor, at Oriel College. As a child he was superstitious, revelling in "The Arabian Nights," delighting in magical processes, and crossing himself in the dark, though brought up amid Protestant surroundings. He tells us that he was "consciously converted" at the age of 16, through reading Scott's Commentary, and at the outset of his ministry he was an Evangelical; but he soon came under the influence of Pusey, Keble, and others, and became a pronounced

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High Churchman. From 1828 to 1843 he was vicar of St. Mary's, Oxford, where his preaching attracted much attention; Mr. Gladstone (then an undergraduate) saying that, though his sermons were read without much change in the inflection of the voice, "his delivery was singularly attractive."

Newman's most famous hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light," was written in 1833, ere he became the leader of the Tractarian Movement, towards which he was strongly tending; and the words sufficiently indicate the state of his mind at the time. Having visited Rome with his friend, Hurrell Froude, he caught a fever in Sicily; and, on his recovery from an illness of three months, expressed a strong desire to return home at once, saying that he had a great work to do in England. He was kept three weeks at Palermo, waiting for a vessel, and at last embarked in an orange boat bound for Marseilles; but he was becalmed for a week in the Straits of Bonifacio, where he composed the familiar lines. It is probably the most dignified hymn in the English language, and contains many beautiful phrases, such as "Kindly light," "encircling gloom," "garish day," "moor and fen," "crag and torrent," and the two pathetic last lines. It was not originally intended for congregational use, and appeared first in the "British Magazine," and subsequently in "Lyra Apostolica"; Dr. Dykes'

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magnificent tune doing much to make it popular, as Newman himself confessed.

On returning to England, he plunged at once into the Oxford Movement, writing twenty-eight of the series of Tracts; the last of which aimed at showing that a clergyman might remain in the Church of England while holding such Romish doctrines as those of the Mass, Purgatory, and the Invocation of Saints. He afterwards resigned the incumbency of St. Mary's, Oxford, and retired to Littlemore; where he formed a monastic Brotherhood, and soon afterwards took the natural and logical step of joining the Church of Rome. The later years of his life were spent at Edgbaston, and Brompton Oratory, where he died at the ripe age of eighty-nine.

The other famous hymn by Cardinal Newman is "Praise to the Holiest in the height," which was an especial favourite with Mr. Gladstone, and was sung at his funeral. It is part of a poem entitled: "The Dream of Gerontius" (composed in 1865), which describes the journey of a soul to Purgatory; and the words are supposed to be those of an angelic choir.

THE REV. EDWARD CASWELL (who was born in 1814 and died in 1878) also joined the Church of Rome in 1847, and to him we owe many beautiful translations and adaptations from Latin authors; among which may be named: "The sun is sinking fast," "Glory be to Jesus," "My

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God, I love Thee," and "When morning gilds the skies." He also wrote the solemn hymn: "Days and moments quickly flying," in 1858.

THE REV. F. W. FABER was born in 1814 of Huguenot stock, but he also perverted to the Church of Rome ten years after his ordination as a clergyman of the Church of England. While at school at Harrow he was deeply influenced by Dr. Butler, and still more so by Dr. Longley; but at Oxford he came under the counteracting influence of Newman. From his early years he showed that he was possessed of a poetical temperament, and he composed the Oxford University Prize Poem of his year. In his later life he wrote one hundred and fifty hymns, a number corresponding with that of the Psalms by a singular coincidence; but he tells us that they were mostly written for private devotional reading. Many have, however, become exceedingly popular; such as "My God, how wonderful Thou art," written in 1840; "Sweet Saviour, bless us ere we go," in 1852; "Hark, hark, my soul," "O Paradise, O Paradise," and "Souls of men, why will ye scatter?" the three last being composed in 1862. His hymns are highly imaginative, and deeply emotional; but some are very morbid in tone, such as "O come and mourn with me awhile." He died at Brompton Oratory in 1863; and it is noteworthy that when he received a letter on his

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death-bed from Cardinal Wiseman, referring to his eminent services to the Church, he exclaimed: "This is very kind; but no one knows better than I do that I have no merits of my own, and that my only hope and trust is in the Sacrifice of my Saviour."

The REV. J. M. NEALE, to whose beautiful translations of Latin and Greek hymns we have already referred, was born in 1818 and died in 1866. He had an Evangelical mother, "to whom," he wrote, "I owe more than I can express;" and doubtless it was due to her influence that, although prominently identified with the Tractarian Movement, he remained in the Church of England. As a youth he was ten times successful in writing Prize Poems, and in later life wrote several volumes of original verse, in addition to his three or four of translations. His best-known original hymns are: "The foe behind, the deep before," and "O Thou, Who by a star didst guide the wise men on their way," the latter being written when he was only twenty-four years old. On his coffin he had written the words, "J. M. Neale, a poor and unworthy priest, who rests beneath the sign of the Cross."

The REV. SIR H. W. BAKER was born in 1821, and died in 1877; and he was the Editor of "Hymns Ancient and Modern," which famous collection he has enriched with several original compositions, besides many excellent translations

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and adaptations. His best-known hymns are: "Praise, O praise our God and King," "Rejoice to-day with one accord," "Lord, Thy Word abideth," "O God of love, O King of peace," which were all composed in 1861; "Out of the deep I call," and "The King of Love my Shepherd is," both written in 1868. It is a touching fact that the last words uttered by the author on his death-bed were two lines of this delightful paraphrase of the twenty-third Psalm :

"And on His shoulder gently laid,
And home, rejoicing, brought me."

while another of his beautiful hymns, "There is a blessed Home" (written in 1861), was sung over his grave.

The REV. J. ELLERTON was born in 1826 and died in 1893, being one of the most famous of modern hymnologists. He aided in the compilation of several hymn books, co-operating with Bishop Walsham How in producing "Church Hymns," besides organizing one of the first choral associations in the Midlands. Some seventy or eighty of his compositions were published, among the best known being: "Saviour, again to Thy dear Name we raise," written for a Choral Festival in 1866; "Our day of praise is done," composed in 1867; "This is the day of light," in 1868; "The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended," in 1870; "Now the labourer's task is o'er," in 1871; and the beautiful wedding hymn,

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“ O Father, all creating,” written for the marriage of the Duke of Westminster’s daughter to the Marquis of Ormonde in 1876. He also added the last verse to the beautiful hymn, “ There is no night in Heaven,” written by Francis Knollis in 1859; in which he skilfully combines the leading thought in the previous stanzas:

“ Lord Jesus, be our Guide ;
O lead us safely on,
Till night, and grief, and sin, and death,
Are past, and Heaven is won.”

To W. C. DIX, an eminent Bristol surgeon (who was born in 1837 and died in 1898), we owe two of our most familiar hymns ; “ As with gladness men of old ” being composed in 1859, and “ Come unto Me, ye weary ” in 1864. The latter was written during a time of illness and great depression, and his hand trembled as he penned the words; but its composition proved the turning point in his malady.

The REV. CANON TWELLS (who was born in 1823 and died in 1900) composed one hymn which it may fairly be prophesied will become immortal, so accurately does it depict the wants and woes of a mixed congregation. “ At even, ere the sun was set,” was specially written in 1868 for “ Hymns Ancient and Modern,” but it proved so popular that the author was asked to give permission for its insertion in no fewer than one hundred and fifty-seven other hymnals !

To the REV. S. J. STONE (who was born in

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1839 and also died in 1900) we owe two beautiful hymns, part of a series of twelve which he wrote on the articles of the Apostles' Creed; "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church" giving rise to the famous one beginning, "The Church's one Foundation"; and "I believe in the forgiveness of sins" to that commencing, "Weary of earth, and laden with my sin." These were composed in 1866, as also was the beautiful Temperance one, "O Father, in Whose great design."

ALBERT MIDLANE was born in 1825 and died in 1909, having left us, besides the well-known hymn, "There's a Friend for little children" (of which we shall speak when we come to consider Children's Hymns), the almost equally familiar one, "Revive Thy work, O Lord," which was written in 1865.

The REV. W. ST. HILL BOURNE (who was born in 1846 and died in 1923), in addition to his well-known children's hymn, "Christ, who once amongst us as a child did dwell," wrote the favourite Harvest Festival one, "The Sower went forth sowing," for the annual Harvest Thanksgiving at Ashford, Kent, in 1874. The tune, which has done so much to popularize it, was composed by Dr. Bridge as his little daughter lay dying, and is called "St. Beatrice" after her.

The REV. S. BARING GOULD (who was born in 1834 and died in 1924) has given us several

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well-known hymns, the chief being: "On the Resurrection morning," written in 1864; "Onward, Christian soldiers," composed in 1865; and "Through the night of doubt and sorrow," in 1867; as well as the familiar children's hymn, "Now the day is over." The second of these was written in great haste the night before a village Sunday School festival in Yorkshire, for use on that occasion; and the author has expressed his surprise at the rapid way in which it found a place in most hymn books, but doubtless Sir Arthur Sullivan's stirring tune had much to do with this.

CHAPTER VI

HYMNS OF OTHER EMINENT CHURCHMEN AND NONCONFORMISTS

HYMNS form the nearest approach to a universal Christian creed, for every hymn book bears eloquent testimony to the essential unity of the Church, despite its sad lack of uniformity; and we may apply to praise the words of Tennyson regarding prayer:

“ So the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains around the feet of God.”

Hymns have a wonderful uniting power, amid the many disintegrating influences that are at work; and every hymn book contains contributions from such enlightened Roman Catholics as Bernard, Newman and Faber, together with such sturdy Protestants as Luther and other Reformers. The hymns of such High Churchmen as Keble and Neale stand side by side with those of such Broad Churchmen as Deans Alford and Milman, and such Low Churchmen as John Newton and Bishop Bickersteth; the compositions of the Calvinistic Toplady and the Arminian Wesley are the delight of all bodies of believers; and even the sweet hymn by a Unitarian, “ Nearer my God, to Thee,” is equally popular with

Hymns of Other Eminent Churchmen

Bishop Heber's noble ode to the Trinity, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty !"

It has been well said that, "in singing hymns, the Church Militant forgets to quarrel" ; for, in devotion before God all are united, though in controversy with each other they stand opposed; and here, at least, is one "form of service" in which churchmen and dissenters can and do unite !

Let us now, therefore, consider the contributions to our hymnology of some other eminent Churchmen and Nonconformists, dwelling chiefly on the former, as we have already considered those of such famous dissenters as Isaac Watts, Robert Montgomery, and Dr. Horatius Bonar.

BISHOP KEN was the first English hymn writer of outstanding merit, and his Morning and Evening hymns have achieved immortal fame. He was born in 1637; and, having lost his father and mother while still a child, he was taken charge of by his stepsister, the wife of the famous Izaak Walton. After being a scholar at Winchester College, and graduating at Oxford, he returned to the former as Master; and wrote a manual of prayers for his pupils in 1674, which is still in use. A later edition contained the famous hymns to which allusion has already been made, together with one for midnight, which is naturally not so well known ! The Morning and Evening hymns are universally

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beloved, which is not surprising; for, while their words are simple and soothing, clear and concise, they call the soul to prayer and praise, worship and work, meditation and aspiration. "Awake, my soul, and with the sun thy daily stage of duty run," was a great favourite with its author, who used to sing it in the early morning, accompanying himself on his lute; and it was rendered at his funeral, which also took place at sunrise. The evening hymn, "Glory to Thee, my God, this night," is no less perfect in expression; while the common ending to all three has been more frequently sung than any verse ever written. The poet Montgomery says of this famous Doxology that it is "a masterpiece at once of amplification and compression;" and the tribute is well deserved, for it ascribes praise for all blessings, temporal and spiritual, from all creatures in earth and heaven, to the ever blessed Trinity.

Ken's was a very eventful life. Becoming chaplain to Charles II, he faithfully strove to awaken the slumbering conscience of that thoughtless monarch; and, when the latter requested the use of the Deanery at Winchester as a residence for his mistress, Nell Gwynne, he stoutly refused. The King honoured him for his courage, and made him Bishop of Bath and Wells in 1684; but, seven years later, James II consigned him to the Tower of London, together with six other

Hymns of Other Eminent Churchmen

Bishops, for declining to read the Declaration of Indulgence. He was triumphantly acquitted at the ensuing trial, but was deprived of his see for refusing to take the oath of allegiance to William of Orange; and spent the last twenty years of his life in quiet retirement, dying in 1711. In his will he declared: "I die in the communion of the Church of England, as it stands distinguished from all Papal and Puritan innovations, and as it adheres to the doctrine of the Cross."

Lord Macaulay wrote of Bishop Ken that "his character approached, as near as human infirmity permits, to the ideal perfection of Christian virtue;" and he was the original of the poet Dryden's ideal priest, of whom he said:

"With eloquence innate his tongue was armed,
Though harsh the precept, yet the preacher charmed."

He combined courage with meekness, was equally ready to rebuke a monarch and forgive a foe; and "kept himself unspotted from the world," alike in his public and his private life. When in London, he would walk while other bishops rode in their coaches; and he used to have twelve poor men to dine with him on Sundays.

The name of RICHARD BAXTER is the greatest on the roll of early Nonconformist divines, though he was a clergyman of the Church of England for over 20 years, and was offered the Bishopric of Hereford. He was the author of the

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famous book, "The Saints' Everlasting Rest," which was written when he was 34 years of age; was the leader of the Presbyterian party at the Savoy Conference in 1661, and there produced a Reformed Liturgy (which he had compiled in a fortnight) as a substitute for the Prayer Book, which was the growth of centuries ! Baxter was born in 1615 and died in 1691; having left us two beautiful hymns, "Ye holy angels bright" and "Lord, it belongs not to my care whether I die or live"; the latter being part of a long poem entitled, "The Covenant and Confidence of Faith."

PHILIP DODDRIDGE was born in 1702, and died 50 years later at Lisbon from rapid consumption. He wrote three hundred and seventy-five hymns, most of them being composed to be sung at the close of his sermons; and, in his published works, they are arranged in the order of the Books of the Bible, according to the texts which supplied their theme. He attributed his knowledge of Holy Scripture to his parents, who both died ere he was thirteen; and writes, "I well remember that my mother taught me the history of the Old and New Testaments ere I could read, and the wise and pious reflections which she made upon those stories were the means of enforcing such good impressions on my heart as never afterwards wore out." He was sent to school at St. Albans, where he came under the

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pastoral care of Dr. Samuel Clarke, the compiler of the well-known book on the Promises of God. He joined his church before he was sixteen years of age, at twenty became a licensed preacher, and eight years later he was given the charge of a Congregational church at Northampton, and of a school from which one hundred and twenty pupils entered the ministry.

His intellectual attainments were remarkable, and his literary compositions profound and elaborate; the most famous being "The rise and progress of Religion in the Soul," which has been published in many languages, and is still a standard book.

The poet Montgomery says of his hymns: "They shine in the beauty of holiness; these offsprings of his mind are arranged in the fine linen, pure and white, which is the righteousness of saints; and (like saints) they are lovely and acceptable, not for their human merit, but for that fervent, unaffected love to God, His service, and His people, which distinguishes them." The most familiar ones, in the order of their composition, are as follows: "Hark the glad sound, the Saviour comes," written in 1735; "Lord of the Sabbath, hear us pray," in 1736; "O God of Bethel, by whose hand Thy people still are fed," in 1737; and "Ye servants of the Lord, each in his office wait," "Tomorrow, Lord, is Thine," "O happy day that

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fixed my choice," "Grace, 'tis a charming sound," "Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve," "Come, condescending Saviour, come," "Fountain of good," and "My God, and is Thy Table spread?" all composed in the last year of his life.

It is remarkable that the last-named hymn was at one time printed in the Communion Service of the Prayer Book (though, of course, without authority), and there it remained for many years, though written by a staunch Nonconformist! "O God of Bethel" was a great favourite with David Livingstone, who learnt it in childhood; and it was sung at his funeral, when "all his wanderings" had indeed "ceased," and "at His Father's loved abode" his soul had at last "arrived in peace."

BISHOP HEBER (who was born in 1783 and died in 1826) has bequeathed us some of the finest gems of English hymnody, and nearly all of the fifty-seven which he wrote are in use to-day. Coming of a scholarly family, he early developed literary tastes, and at the age of seven had translated the Latin poem, "Phædrus" into English verse. Going up to Oxford University, he carried off the prize for the best Latin poem in his first year of residence; and, two years later, won the prize for English verse by his poem on Palestine. From a child, he possessed a sweet disposition, and prayer was a

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constant exercise with him; hence we need not be surprised to hear that, on the latter occasion, he withdrew himself from a crowd of congratulating friends to return thanks to God for his success in the privacy of his own room.

The story of the origin of his famous missionary hymn, "From Greenland's icy mountains," is a very interesting one. Heber was then rector of Hodnet in Shropshire, and had come to Wrexham to stay with his father-in-law, who was Dean of St. Asaph as well as vicar of Wrexham. The Dean was to preach on Whit-Sunday morning, 1819, on behalf of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel; and, on the previous evening, asked his son-in-law to compose a suitable hymn for the occasion. Heber accordingly retired to a table in a distant part of the drawing-room; and when the Dean shortly afterwards asked him how he was progressing handed him the first three verses of the well-known hymn. "That will do very well," said the Dean; but Heber replied, "No, no, the sense is not complete," and added the beautiful fourth verse. He wanted to compose yet another, but his father-in-law would not allow it; and the familiar lines were sung in their present form in Wrexham Parish Church on the following morning. An examination of the original manuscript, which is still preserved, shows that the only alteration made during its hasty composition was the

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substitution of the word "heathen" for "savage" in the second verse; and that the last verse was written in a trembling hand, as if its composer was much moved with emotion.

Other well-known hymns by this gifted writer are : "Hosanna to the living Lord" and "Brightest and best of the sons of the morning," both composed in 1811; "Lord of mercy and of might," in 1812; "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," "Bread of the world, in mercy broken," "Spirit of Truth, on this Thy Day," and "The Son of God goes forth to war," all of which only appeared in 1827, after his death.

Though a man of such high literary attainments, becoming in turn preacher at Lincoln's Inn and Bampton Lecturer, he had never neglected his parochial duties; indeed, he at one time thought of burning all his books, and devoting himself wholly to pastoral work. Twice he was offered and refused the important Bishopric of Calcutta; but when the offer was made a third time he regarded it as a clear call from God, and sailed for India in 1823. The Diocese of Calcutta then included the whole of India and Ceylon, with Australia and the Mauritius; and three years of constant travelling so wore him out that he was found dead in his bath, just after confirming forty-two persons, at the early age of 43. Thackeray, the famous novelist, pays him the following glowing tribute in his book entitled,

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“The Four Georges”: “The charming poet, the happy possessor of all sorts of gifts and accomplishments, birth, wit, fame, high character, competence; he was the beloved parish priest in his own home at Hodnet, counselling the people in their troubles, advising them in their difficulties, kneeling often at their sick beds at the risk of his own life; where there was strife, the peacemaker; where there was want, the free giver.”

We may well say of him, in the words of the beautiful funeral hymn which he wrote for his infant daughter :

“Thou art gone to the grave, but we will not deplore thee,
For God was thy ransom, thy guardian, and guide ;
He gave thee, He took thee, and He will restore thee ;
And death has no sting since the Saviour has died.”

BISHOP MANT, who was born in 1776 and died in 1848, presided successively over the Sees of Killaloe, Down and Connor, and Dromore, and published many works in prose and verse, including commentaries on the Bible and Prayer Book, a metrical version of the Psalms, and several translations of Latin hymns (including the familiar one for Good Friday, “See the destined day arise”). His original compositions embrace “Bright the vision that delighted” and “For all Thy saints in warfare, for all Thy saints at rest,” which both appeared in 1837.

DEAN MILMAN, who was born in 1791, and

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died in 1868, was an accomplished classical scholar, and had a very distinguished career. He was successively Professor of Poetry at Oxford—where he composed most of his fourteen hymns, and also his great poem entitled, “The Fall of Jerusalem”—Canon of Westminster, and Dean of St. Paul’s. His great masterpiece in prose was “The History of the Jews,” and his hymns include, “Brother, thou art gone before us,” written in 1822; “O help us, Lord, each hour of need,” “Ride on, ride on in majesty,” and “When our heads are bowed with woe,” written in 1827. The latter is founded on the miracle of the raising to life of the Widow of Nain’s son, and hence the refrain, “Jesus, son of Mary, hear,” is an appeal to Christ’s human sympathy.

Another Church dignitary who has enriched our hymn books is the REV. J. H. GURNEY, Prebendary of St. Paul’s Cathedral, who was born in 1802 and died 60 years later. To him we owe the noble confession of national sin, beginning, “Great King of nations, hear our prayer,” and the beautiful hymn commencing, “Lord, as to Thy dear Cross we flee,” both composed in 1838; and “We saw Thee not when Thou didst come,” and “Lord of the harvest, Thee we hail,” which were both written in 1851.

DEAN ALFORD (who was born in 1810 and died in 1871) is best known by his famous version of

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the New Testament from the original Greek, which cost him 20 years' labour, and was the forerunner of our Revised Version; but his hymns alone would have sufficed to prove his literary powers. He tells us that they were chiefly composed during solitary walks in the neighbourhood of Canterbury, with the object of developing congregational singing at the Cathedral services. The well-known harvest hymn, "Come, ye thankful people, come," was written in 1844; the fine baptismal hymn, "In token that thou shalt not fear," in 1845; the noble Advent hymn, "Ten thousand times ten thousand," in 1867; and the processional hymn, "Forward be our watchword," for a festival of parochial choirs in the Cathedral in the year of his death. His Advent hymn was sung at his funeral, and the touching inscription carved upon his tomb is, "The inn of a pilgrim travelling to Jerusalem."

The RIGHT REV. CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH, BISHOP OF LINCOLN, was a nephew of the famous poet, and was himself a brilliant scholar. He was born in 1807, and died in 1885, leaving one hundred and twenty-seven hymns as a legacy to the Church; of which the best known are: "O day of rest and gladness" "Alleluia, Alleluia, hearts to heaven and voices raise," "See the conqueror mounts in triumph," "Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost," and "Hark,

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the sound of holy voices," all of which appeared in 1862; and "O Lord of Heaven, and earth, and sea," in 1863. He declared it to be "the first duty of a hymn writer to teach sound doctrine, and thus to save souls"; and he certainly practised what he preached.

DEAN PLUMPTRE, of Wells, was born in 1821, and died 70 years later; leaving us the beautiful hospital hymn, "Thine arm, O Christ, in days of old was strong to heal and save," which was written for the chapel of King's College Hospital in 1865.

The RIGHT REV. W. WALSHAM HOW was born in 1823, and died in 1897. He declined the Bishoprics of Natal in 1867, New Zealand in 1868, Montreal in 1869, Cape Town in 1873, and Jamaica in 1878. Accepting the post of Suffragan to the Bishop of London, he started the East London Church Fund, and was known in the metropolis as "the children's Bishop," and "the omnibus Bishop," from his partiality for both! He afterwards became Bishop of Wakefield, and has left us sixty beautiful hymns, of which the best known are: "We give Thee but Thine own," and "Who is this, so weak and helpless?" both written in 1854; "O Word of God Incarnate," and "O Jesu, Thou art standing," in 1866; "For all Thy saints, who from their labours rest," in 1867; and "To Thee, our God, we fly," in 1871.

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The REV. GODFREY THRING, Prebendary of Wells Cathedral, was born in 1823, and died in 1903. He published himself a book entitled, "The Church of England Hymn Book," besides composing such beautiful specimens as : "Fierce raged the tempest o'er the deep," in 1861; "Saviour, blessed Saviour, listen whilst we sing," in 1862; "The radiant morn hath passed away," in 1866; "Thou, to whom the sick and dying," in 1870; and "Asleep in Jesus," in 1882.

The last prominent churchman who claims our attention is in many respects the most famous of them all, for he was the compiler of the "Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer," which he enriched with many of his own compositions.

The RIGHT REV. E. H. BICKERSTETH was born in 1825, and died in 1906; being vicar of Christ Church, Hampstead, for 30 years, then for a short time Dean of Gloucester, and afterwards Bishop of Exeter for 15 years. He was a poet of no mean order, winning the Chancellor's Prize for English verse at Cambridge University in three successive years, and composing a volume entitled, "Yesterday, To-day, and For Ever," in later life. Between thirty and forty of this gifted writer's hymns are in common use, the most familiar being: "O brothers, lift your voices," composed in 1848; "O God, the Rock of Ages," in 1862; "Till He come," "Hush,

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blessed are the dead," "My God, my Father, dost Thou call?" all in 1870; and "Peace, perfect peace," in 1876. The latter was written while spending a holiday at Harrogate, and was suggested by a sermon preached one Sunday morning by Canon Gibbons from Isaiah xxvi. 3. Going to visit the same afternoon an aged and dying relative (Archdeacon Hill), who was much troubled in mind, Bickersteth wrote it on a sheet of paper by his bedside, and read it to him, afterwards reading it to his own family at tea. No alteration was ever made in it, but it has been translated into many languages, and it was sung at the funeral of his eldest son, the Bishop of Tokio, the first three verses being also carved on his tombstone.

CHAPTER VII

WOMEN WRITERS AND HYMNS FOR CHILDREN

WE are considering women hymn writers last, but this by no means implies that their contributions to our store of Sacred Song are least in interest and importance.

We have seen how the first sacred song recorded in Holy Scripture was led by Miriam and the women of Israel on the shores of the Red Sea ; and we read in 1 Samuel xviii. 6, 7, that the women went out to meet King Saul, after David's conquest of Goliath, singing, " Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

In the Revised Version of Psalm lxviii. 11. we read, " The Lord gave the word; the women that publish the tidings are a great host;" and these words occur in a Psalm prophetic of the days in which we live. We have already considered the noble odes composed by Deborah, Hannah and Mary; and we shall now see that these were the ancestresses of a long line of famous female hymn writers, though the interval between them is one of many centuries.

The first prominent name is that of ANNE STEELE, the daughter of a Baptist minister, who was also a timber merchant. She was born in 1716, and died in 1778, leaving us three volumes

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of sacred verse, containing 144 hymns, 34 metrical psalms, and 30 other poems. She was one who learnt in suffering what she taught in song; for, on the morning of her intended wedding day, the bridegroom was drowned while bathing, and she penned one of the sweetest hymns on resignation ever written, commencing, "Father, whate'er of earthly bliss Thy sovereign will denies." This, together with the familiar hymn, "Father of mercies, in Thy Word what endless glory shines," and the less well-known one beginning, "Far from these narrow scenes of night," appeared in 1760. An accident which happened to her in girlhood, together with frequent illnesses, made her a lifelong invalid; and she did not long survive the death of her father, whom she dearly loved. On her tombstone, in Broughton churchyard, is inscribed the following suitable verse :

"Silent the lyre, and dumb the tuneful tongue
That sang on earth her great Redeemer's praise;
But now, in Heaven, she tunes a nobler song;
In more exalted, more melodious lays."

ANNA LÆTICIA BARBOULD (who was born in 1743 and died in 1825) has left us a beautiful hymn for the Lord's Day, beginning, "Again the Lord of Life and Light awakes the kindling ray"; and ALICE FLOWERDEW, widow of an official in Jamaica (who was born in 1759 and died in 1830), wrote, "Fountain of mercy, God of love."

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HARRIET AUBER (who was born in 1773 and died in 1862) has only written one hymn that has become famous, but it is probably the most beautiful of all that we possess upon the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit. "Our blest Redeemer, ere He breathed His tender, last farewell," first appeared in 1829 in a collection of sacred poems written by her, entitled, "The Spirit of the Psalms," but it has been translated into many languages. A curious circumstance connected with this hymn is that the lines were written by her with a diamond upon a pane of glass in her house at Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire.

TO SARAH FLOWER ADAMS, a Unitarian, we owe one of our most popular hymns, "Nearer, my God, to Thee," which is to be found in the hymn books of every Christian denomination, for it well expresses the yearning of every devout spirit for closer communion with God. She was born in 1805 at Harlow in Essex; but her mother died five years later, leaving her and a sister two years older to the widowed father. As a girl she is said to have been "gay and impulsive, full of sparkling wit and kindly humour"; and an intimacy sprang up between her and Robert Browning when she was twenty-two, and he only fifteen. In later years he and she, together with John Stuart Mill, contributed regularly to a periodical entitled, "The Monthly Repository"; and some articles in it, signed "Junius Redivivus" so

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attracted her attention that she commenced to correspond with the unknown author. He turned out to be a distinguished engineer and inventor named Adams, and the mutual attraction led to their marriage in 1834.

This gifted writer had a great ambition to adopt the stage as a profession, and, after appearing as Lady Macbeth at a Richmond theatre, she was offered an engagement by the celebrated Macready; but, as an earlier tendency to consumption strongly developed, she had to decline it. The disappointment did much to ripen her character, and she wrote some fourteen hymns ere her death in 1848, of which only "Nearer my God, to Thee" has become famous. It was written in 1840 for the Unitarian congregation in London, to which she then belonged, and set to music by her elder sister; since when it has been translated into several languages.

Among many incidents told in connection with this hymn, two may be here related. A little drummer boy, during the American Civil War, was found dying, one arm having been carried away by a cannon ball; but he was singing with his rapidly-failing breath the words of this hymn, which he had learnt at home or in Sunday School. A Unitarian woman, who lay dying, was visited by a Christian minister, to whom she confided her consciousness of the need of some way of access to God. "I sing, 'Nearer,

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my God, to 'Thee,' " she said; " but I seem to have hold of nothing. I want to get at God, so to speak, but I cannot. What shall I do ? " The minister replied, " Let the Cross raise you; come to your Heavenly Father through the Crucified One, Jesus Christ His Son " ; and her troubled soul found peace. A verse is added in some of our hymnals, to supply what is lacking in the beautiful original :

" Christ alone beareth me
Where Thou dost shine ;
Joint-heir He maketh me
Of the Divine ;
In Christ my soul shall be
Nearest, my God, to Thee,
Nearest to Thee."

President McKinley constantly repeated this beautiful hymn during his last illness, and we all remember how it was played by the band during the foundering of the ill-fated *Titanic*.

CHARLOTTE ELLIOTT has enriched our hymn books with many beautiful compositions, which it may be safely prophesied will become immortal. She had a long life, being born in 1789, and not dying till 1871, but it was one marked by continuous suffering; indeed, during the last forty years of it she was a helpless invalid. She was another of those who learnt in suffering what she taught in song, for her hymns were the direct outcome of her personal experience; and she realized and acted upon the words of St. Paul in 2 Corinthians i. 3, 4: " The God of all comfort

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comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." Her own painful experiences, while precluding her from sharing in the active engagements of life, certainly fitted her for her own special ministry, to the great and endless comfort of mourners and sufferers the wide world over.

Though brought up amid decidedly Evangelical surroundings (her mother being the daughter of the Rev. Henry Venn, one of the leaders of the Revival), it was not till she was thirty-three years of age that the great change "from death unto life" was experienced in her soul. Dr. Caesar Malan, of Geneva, while visiting her father's house, spoke to her on spiritual matters in the drawing-room, and urged her to come to an immediate decision for Christ. "Surely, I cannot come to Him here and now" she exclaimed; and he replied, "Certainly, come to Him just as you are"; words which not only led to her immediate conversion, but which she afterwards enshrined in her most famous hymn, as we shall presently see.

When no longer able to attend public worship, through her physical infirmity, she wrote: "My Bible is my church; it is always open, and there my High Priest is ever waiting to receive me. There I have my confessional, my thanksgiving, my psalm of praise, my exceeding great and

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precious promises, and a congregation of whom the world is not worthy—prophets and apostles, saints and martyrs—in short, all I can want I there find.” Most of her hymns were written in an harbour overlooking the beautiful bay of Torquay, and were published in a book which she entitled, “The Invalid’s Hymn Book”; and one very striking feature of her compositions is that each verse usually ends with the same line. Taking the most familiar in the apparent order of their composition, “O Thou, the contrite sinner’s Friend,” appeared in 1833; “My God, my Father, while I stray,” in 1834; “My God, is any hour so sweet?” and “Just as I am, without one plea,” in 1836; “Let me be with Thee, where Thou art,” in 1837; “Christian, seek not yet repose,” in 1839; and “O Holy Saviour, Friend unseen,” in 1840.

The circumstances under which “Just as I am” was composed are very interesting, though, as we have seen, it enshrines the earlier ones of her conversion. Her brother was then getting up a Sale of Work to raise funds for the erection of St. Mary’s Hall, at Brighton, which still carries on its useful work of providing a good education at reduced cost for the daughters of clergymen; and, on the night before the sale, she was kept awake by a distressing sense of her own apparent uselessness in the undertaking, owing to her infirmity. The Devil took advantage

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of this condition of her mind to engender in it a doubt as to the reality of her conversion; and, after a night of painful spiritual conflict, she set down in writing for her own comfort what she called "the formula of her faith." When her sister-in-law came in from the Sale of Work and saw it, she asked for a copy, and had it printed anonymously, unknown to the authoress; but soon after, when her doctor handed her a printed copy, saying, "I am sure this will please you," she acknowledged its authorship.

This hymn has been translated into every European language, and has probably helped more souls to find salvation than any ever written; but two instances of its use, under widely different circumstances, can alone be mentioned now. It was a great comfort to the daughter of the poet Wordsworth during her last illness, for she often repeated it day and night to her husband. Upon the other hand, a little waif of the streets came to a missionary in New York with a torn and dirty leaflet containing its words, saying, "We found it, sir, in sister's pocket after she died. She used to be always singing it, and she asked father to get a clean copy and frame it." The hymn is, of course, based upon our Lord's words recorded in St. John vi. 37, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out," and expresses the soul's answer to the gracious assurance, conscious of its own sinfulness and relying upon His all-sufficiency.

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ELIZABETH MILLS, who was the wife of a Member of Parliament, was born in 1805 and died in 1829; writing, only a few weeks before her death, the beautiful hymn, "We speak of the realms of the blest," whose last lines were so prophetic in her case :

"Shortly we also shall know,
And feel what it is to be there."

EMMA TOKE, daughter of the Bishop of Kilmore, was born in 1812, and died in 1872, leaving us the fine Ascension hymn beginning, "Thou art gone up on high," which was written in 1851.

ELIZABETH C. CLEPHANE, daughter of the Sheriff of Fifeshire, was born in 1830 and died in 1869. Two years before her death she wrote the beautiful hymn commencing, "Beneath the Cross of Jesus"; while we shall see in our next chapter that the still more famous one beginning, "There were ninety and nine" did not appear till five years afterwards, when Mr. Sankey used it in his Edinburgh Mission, composing the familiar tune as he sang it.

This brings us to speak of a writer who has enriched the pages of "Sacred Songs and Solos" with some of its best-known hymns. FANNY J. CROSBY was born in 1823 and died in 1915, being very much to America what Watts and Wesley were to England. She lost her sight when only six weeks old, through the ignorant

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application of a hot poultice to her eyes; but at the age of eight she wrote:

“ Oh, what a happy soul am I !
Although I cannot see,
I am resolved that, in this world,
Contented I will be ;
How many blessings I enjoy
That other people don't !
To weep and sigh because I'm blind,
I cannot, and I won't ! ”

She was converted when fifteen, and wrote no fewer than eight thousand hymns. Miss Crosby was not only a prolific writer, but a very prompt one ; thus she composed “ Saved by Grace ” in an hour, after hearing an address upon the subject at a Prayer Meeting. “ Rescue the perishing ” was written after visiting one of the worst slum districts in New York ; while “ What are you going to do, brother ? ” was composed for use in the Y.M.C.A.'s of America. “ Safe in the arms of Jesus ” was written in half an hour to fit a tune which had been composed by Mr. W. H. Doane, who asked her to write words for it ; while “ Saviour, more than life to me,” was also written for a tune previously composed by him, at his request.

The most familiar of the fifty-six of Miss Crosby's hymns which appear in “ Sacred Songs and Solos,” in addition to those already named, are as follows, treating them alphabetically :
“ A blessing for you, will you take it ? ” “ A few more marchings weary,” “ All the way my

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Saviour leads me," "Behold Me standing at the door," "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine," "Come, oh, come with thy broken heart," "Come with thy sins to the Fountain," "Hark! there comes a whisper," "Here from the world we turn," "Hold Thou my hand," "I am Thine, O Lord," "Jesus is tenderly calling thee home," "Jesus, keep me near the Cross," "Jesus the water of life has given," "Mourner, whereso'er thou art," "My song shall be of Jesus," "Nearer the cross, my heart can say," "Oh, come, sinner come, 'tis mercy's call," "Oh, come to the Saviour, believe in His Name," "Oh, hear my cry, be gracious now to me," "Oh, precious words that Jesus said," "On that bright and golden morning when the Son of Man shall come," "Only a step to Jesus," "Only Jesus feels and knows," "Pass me not, O gentle Saviour," "Praise Him ! Praise Him ! Jesus, our blessed Redeemer," "Sinner, how thy heart is troubled," "Tenderly He leads us," "Thou my everlasting portion," "'Tis the blessed hour of prayer," "To God be the glory, great things He hath done," "To the work ! To the work," "'Twill not be long, our journey here," "When Jesus comes to reward His servants," and "When the dewy light was fading."

Miss Crosby puts a note at the head of the last-named hymn, stating that it was suggested by the story of a little girl whose mother told her she

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was always in the way. On her death-bed, a fortnight later, she became delirious ; and, her mind running on the words, she asked if there would be room for her in Heaven, saying, "I was always in your way, Mother, you had no room for little Mary ! and shall I be in the angels' way ? "

C. FRANCES ALEXANDER, wife of the late Primate of All Ireland, was born in 1823 and died in 1895. She is chiefly famous for her many beautiful children's hymns, of which we shall speak presently ; but she wrote four hundred in all, and the best known of her general hymns are "Souls in heathen darkness lying," composed in 1851 ; "Jesus calls us o'er the tumult," written in 1852 ; "The roseate hues of early dawn," composed in 1853 ; and "When wounded sore, the stricken heart," written in 1858.

The name of FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL will ever be cherished as that of one of the sweetest singers of the Church Militant, and about one hundred of her hymns are in common use. She was born in 1836, and died in 1879 ; and, like Miss Charlotte Elliott, was an invalid most of her life. Her father, Canon Havergal, was himself a great hymn writer and musician ; indeed, he refused the Professorship of Music at Oxford University ; and his talents were inherited by his daughter in a very marked degree. She developed astonishing intellectual powers at a very early age, for when only four

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years old she could read the Bible, and she wrote verses when only seven ! In later years she knew all the New Testament, and much of the Old by heart, and could play all Handel's music and most of Beethoven's and Mendelssohn's without the score ; while she knew Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and several modern languages. With reference to these wonderful powers, she beautifully wrote :

“ I bless Thee, gracious Father, for Thy pleasant gifts
to me ;
And earnestly I ask Thee that they may always be,
In perfect consecration, laid at Thy glorious feet,
Touched with Thine altar-fire, and made an offering
pure and sweet.”

She was converted at fifteen years of age, while at a Girls' Boarding School ; and writes of that time : “ I committed my soul to the Saviour, and earth and heaven seemed brighter from that moment.” Regarding her confirmation, two years later, she says : “ My heart beat very fast, and my breath almost seemed to stop while the solemn question was being put by the Bishop. Never, I think, did I feel my own weakness and utter helplessness so much. I hardly dared answer, but “ the Lord is my strength ” was graciously suggested to me ; and then the words came quickly from my very heart : ‘ Lord, I cannot do it without Thee ; but oh ! with Thy Almighty Power, I do ! ’ ”

Miss Havergal's ill-health obliged her to spend much of her time abroad, but her exper-

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iences in foreign travel were all consecrated to the development of her natural gifts, and much of her poetry is "coloured" (so to speak) by the Swiss scenery in which she especially delighted. Her books of verses include, "The Ministry of Song," "Under the Surface," "Life Mosaic," "Life Chords," and "Life Echoes;" while her best-known prose works are "Kept for the Master's Use," "My King," "Royal Commandments," "Royal Bounty," "Royal Invitations," and "Loyal Responses."

Miss Havergal's hymns are marked by their bright and joyous tone, and her own account of the way in which they were written is deeply interesting. She said: "Writing is praying with me, for I never seem to write even a verse by myself, and I feel like a little child writing. You know how a child would look up at every sentence, and say 'What shall I say next?' That is just what I do; I ask at every line that He would give me, not merely thoughts and power, but every word, even the very rhymes." Can it, therefore, be wondered at that her hymns have such a delightfully easy flow, and that they have had such a marvellous mission?

Some of her best hymns were written "on the spur of the moment;" as she herself said, "They came, Minerva-fashion, full grown." Thus the earliest of her hymns in general use, composed when she was only twenty-three years of age, was written

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in the study of a German pastor. Coming in, tired, from a long walk, she sat down opposite a picture of Christ crowned with thorns, under which the words were printed, "All this have I done for thee, what doest thou for Me?" She tells us that the words of the hymn flashed upon her in a moment, and she hurriedly wrote them down on a scrap of paper ; but she was so dissatisfied with them that she threw it on the fire, whence, however, it fell out unhurt. This made her think of showing the lines to her father, who was so pleased with them that he wrote a special tune for the hymn, entitled "Baca." The original form, "I gave My life for thee," is changed in many hymn books to "Thy life was given for me," as being more suited for congregational use.

"Tell it out among the heathen that the Lord is King," was written one snowy Sunday morning in 1872, when prevented from attending church through the severity of the weather. The first line of this stirring missionary hymn appears in Psalm xcvi. 10, Prayer Book Version, and, as she was reading it to herself, not only the words but the music was suggested to her ; and the tune, with its complete harmonies, was written out by the time the family returned from church.

The beautiful consecration hymn, "Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee," was written the year before she died, under the following circumstances. She was staying in a

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house where ten people lived, of whom some were converted but were not rejoicing believers, and the rest were unconverted. In answer to her earnest prayer, "Lord, give me every soul in this house," she was the means of blessing to every inmate; on retiring to rest after the conversion of the last two, she felt too happy to sleep, and renewed her own consecration in these simple but striking words, "the couplets forming themselves, and chiming in my heart one after the other," as she tells us. The words were originally set to her father's tune "Patmos," but they are usually sung either to a melody by Mozart or to Dr. Dykes' familiar tune entitled "St. Bees."

The most familiar of Miss Havergal's other hymns, taking them in the order of their composition, are as follows: "In full and glad surrender," written in 1869; "I bring my sins to Thee," and "O Saviour, precious Saviour, whom yet unseen we love," in 1870; "Lord, speak to me that I may speak," and "To Thee, O Comforter Divine," in 1872; "I could not do without Thee," "Thou art coming, O my Saviour," and "Standing at the portal of the opening year," in 1873; "Who is on the Lord's side?" in 1877; and "True-hearted, whole-hearted, faithful and loyal" (to which she also wrote the tune) and "I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus," in 1878. The last-named was her favour-

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ite, and was found in her pocket Bible after her death ; while she died singing Jane Walker's similar hymn, commencing " Jesus, I will trust Thee," to her own tune entitled " Hermas," thus acting on the words of Psalm civ. 33, " I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live : I will sing praise to my God while I have my being." Truly this gifted authoress' wish, expressed in the following beautiful lines, has been abundantly fulfilled :

" O be my verse a hidden stream, which silently may
flow
Where drooping leaf, and thirsty flower, in lonesome
valleys grow ;
And often, by its shady course, to pilgrim heart be
brought
The quiet and refreshment of an upward pointing
thought,
Till, blending with the broad, bright stream of
sanctified endeavour,
God's glory be its ocean home—the end it seeketh
ever ! "

The last of the long line of lady hymn-writers was MARY F. MAUDE, who was born in 1819, and did not die till 1913 ; and who has left us one hymn of outstanding merit : " Thine for ever, God of love." In 1847 her husband was vicar of St. Thomas, Newport, Isle of Wight ; and she taught a class of elder girls, who were then preparing for Confirmation. Being obliged to leave home for her health at the time, she wrote twelve letters to her class, which were afterwards published by the Sunday

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School Institute. One of them contained the familiar lines, which were embodied in the S.P.C.K. Hymnal without her knowledge ; and, subsequently, applications came from the proprietors of many other hymn books for permission to use the hymn. It was chosen by Queen Victoria to be sung at the Confirmation of one of the Royal Princesses, and was a great favourite with the late Archbishop Benson, being sung at his funeral services both at Hawarden and Canterbury. By a remarkable coincidence it was the last hymn selected by the authoress' own husband, who was then vicar of Chirk, to be sung at Family Worship ; and, three days later, he was gently led " from earth to Heaven." There are other women hymn-writers to be referred to, but they are only known by their hymns for children, with which important subject we must deal in conclusion.

It is sad to relate that, until the last century, very little was done in the way of providing suitable hymns for children ; but it is very gratifying to record how amply that want has been since supplied, and now there are several hymn books entirely devoted to them.

Our Lord Himself seems to have valued their singing more than that of adults ; for we read in St. Matthew xxi. 15, 16, that, when the children were crying " Hosanna " in the Temple Courts, and the chief Priests and Scribes angrily and scornfully said, " Hearest Thou what these

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say ? ” Jesus replied, “ Yea, have ye never read,
Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast
perfected praise ? ”

It is noteworthy that the earliest Christian hymn extant is one for children, written by CLEMENT of Alexandria in Greek about the year 200. It is in the form of an Invocation to Christ the Saviour, for the use of the young, and contains the following lines :

“ Shepherd of the Royal lambs,
Thy simple children gather
To praise holily, to sing sincerely,
With guileless mouths,
Christ, the leader of children.
O little ones, with tender mouths,
Nourished up, filled from the breast
With the Spirit’s dew,
Your simple praises bring,
Your sincere hymns to Christ the King.”

It is a literal translation of part of the original, but some hymn books contain the following version, adapted for modern use :

“ Shepherd of tender youth,
Guiding, in love and truth,
Through devious ways ;
Christ, our triumphant King,
We come Thy Name to sing,
And here our children bring
To shout Thy praise.”

Yet, for generations of English children, the only sacred poetry which was written was contained in what was called “ The New England Primer,” which impressed doctrines and history in such rude and grotesque rhymes as:

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“ In Adam’s Fall,
We sinnèd all.”

“ Young Obadiah,
David, Josiah,
All were pious.”

and

“ Peter denied
His Lord, and cried.”

It should be said, however, that the series contained one pretty stanza, which is still used in some homes :

“ Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep ;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.”

Dr. Watts was the first to realize the necessity of making some provision for the spiritual needs of children in sacred poetry, and he published in 1720 a book entitled, “Divine and Moral Songs for Children.” He was never married, but was very fond of children, and spent the last thirty-six years of his life with Sir Thomas Abney, for whose children he originally wrote these hymns. Many of their quaint phrases have become household words, such as “How doth the little busy bee improve each shining hour,” “Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do,” “’Tis the voice of the sluggard, I hear him complain, You have waked me too soon, I must slumber again,” and “Let dogs delight to bark and bite, For God has made them so”; while two of the hymns find a place in most hymn books, “I sing the Almighty power of God”

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and "Lord, how delightful 'tis to see." On his statue in Western Park, Southampton, are inscribed the words : "He gave to lisping infancy its earliest and purest lessons" ; but, after the fashion of the theology of that day, he appealed too often to motives of fear rather than love, as will be seen from the following lines :

"What if His dreadful anger burn,
While I refuse His offered grace ;
And all His love to fury turn,
And strike me dead upon the place ?"

Dr. Watts himself seems to have been conscious of the need of more suitable hymns for children, for he calls his hymns "a slight specimen of Moral Songs, such as I wish some happy and condescending genius would undertake for the use of children, and perform much better" ; and certainly there has been an improvement in quality, as well as quantity, since his days !

CHARLES WESLEY, in 1742, wrote the familiar hymn, "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild," and PHILIP DODDRIDGE, in 1755, one which is less well known, "See Israel's gentle Shepherd stands" ; but it was the sisters ANN and JANE TAYLOR who really were the pioneers of children's hymnody, and a great step forward was made by their publication in 1809 of "Hymns for Infant Minds." The latter wrote, "My method was to shut my eyes, and imagine the presence of some pretty little mortal, and then endeavour to catch, as it were, the very language it would use

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on the subject before me." This accounts for the beautiful simplicity of such hymns, written by the sisters, as "Jesus, who lived above the sky," "God is in Heaven, can He hear?" "Great God, and wilt Thou condescend?" "Lord, teach a little child to pray," and "There is a path that leads to God."

BISHOP HEBER wrote the beautiful children's hymn, "By cool Siloam's shady rill," in 1812; and PREBENDARY GURNEY composed "Fair waved the golden corn" and "Yes, God is good," in 1838; while, in the following year, the familiar lines beginning "Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me" appeared from the pen of Mrs. DUNCAN. The equally well-known hymn, "I think when I read that sweet story of old" was written by JEMIMA LUKE, wife of a Congregational minister, in 1841. She was a contributor to the "Juvenile Magazine" at the age of thirteen, and lived for a further period of eighty years, but this is the only hymn she has left us; and she wrote regarding it, "It was a little inspiration from above, and not in me, for I have never written any other verses worthy of preservation." In this case the tune suggested the words; for, being struck with the pathetic beauty of the well-known Greek air to which it is now wedded, she wrote the first two verses on the back of an old envelope while riding in a stage-coach, afterwards adding the third to give the hymn a missionary character.

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It is, however, to MRS. ALEXANDER we owe the best of our children's hymns, most of which first appeared in her "Hymns for Children," which was published in 1848. The most familiar are, "All things bright and beautiful," "Do no sinful action," "Every morning the red sun rises warm and bright," "Once in Royal David's city," "We are but little children weak," and "There is a green hill far away." The last named is, of course, the best known and most loved, and has been translated into many languages ; for, in its five verses, it gives a simple but sublime summary of the Gospel. It was composed, three years before her marriage, while sitting by the bedside of a sick child ; and Charles Gounod described it as "the most perfect hymn in the English language." The illustrious composer and his wife came over to England during the Franco-German war, accompanied by their little daughter who learnt it at school ; and the father was so delighted with it that he composed for it his famous setting.

The well-known hymn "There's a Friend for little children," was written by ALBERT MIDLANE in 1858, and the author just lived to hear it sung in St. Paul's Cathedral by a congregation of three thousand children at a special service held to commemorate its jubilee.

The REV. S. BARING GOULD wrote "Now the day is over" in 1865, while watching a wonderful sunset over Brixham harbour ; and FANNY J.

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CROSBY composed "If I come to Jesus" in 1868. FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL wrote "Golden Harps are sounding" in 1871, composing it in ten minutes while leaning against the wall of a school playground at Perry Bar ; but her other children's hymn, "Now the daylight goes away," did not appear till after her death.

The Church of England Sunday School Institute published a collection entitled "Hymns for Church Sunday Schools" in 1847, following this up with an Appendix in 1861, and producing a new book entitled "The Church Sunday School Hymn Book" in 1868.

Mrs. CAREY BROCK (with the assistance of Bishops Walsham How and Ashton Oxenden, and the Rev. John Ellerton) produced her well-known "Children's Hymn Book" in 1877, and the Children's Special Service Mission first published the popular collection entitled "Golden Bells" in 1890.

Every provision has, therefore, now been made for supplying our children with hymns conveying sentiments within their own experience, expressed in language within their comprehension, avoiding all mawkish sentimentality and unhealthy unreality, which are fatal to the simplicity and truthfulness of childhood ; and we may be sure that He Who once found "perfect praise" in children's voices still "delights to hear their song."

CHAPTER VIII

SOME MELODY MAKERS

OUR consideration of the story of Sacred Song would, surely, be incomplete without some reference to the chief composers of the tunes to which our best-known and loved hymns are wedded. St. Augustine, in his "Confessions," writes, "I am inclined to approve of the usage of singing in the church, that so, by the delight of the ears, the weaker minds may be raised to feelings of devotion"; but adds, "I feel that I have sinned penally when I have been moved by the voice singing, rather than by the words sung." Music stirs our deepest feelings more than any other art, but there is a grave danger of mistaking emotion for devotion; and only when it helps us to sing "with the spirit" is it of any value as an adjunct to public worship, for it has well been said:

"O Lord, we know it matters not
How sweet the sound may be;
No hearts but of the Spirit taught
Make melody to Thee."

We shall all agree with the words of George Herbert:

"The fineness which a hymn or psalm affords
Is when the soul unto the lines accords."

and we have, happily, many examples of this in

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our modern hymn books. Of course, it is most likely that this fitting combination should exist where the same person composes both the music and the words, but such cases are comparatively rare. We have already seen how MARTIN RINCKART composed the melody to his famous "Nun Danket" in the same sublime moment of inspiration, and sang it to the assembled multitude in the market place of Eilenberg; and Luther also composed the tune to "Ein' Feste Burg," which appears in "Sacred Songs and Solos."

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL was a very talented musician, as well as poetess; and the eminent composer Hiller expressed himself astonished at her harmonies, the more so as she had not studied the art of composition. In addition to writing a book of Sacred Songs, she also composed the music for some of her hymns, two having interesting circumstances connected with them. The well-known "Hermas," to "Golden harps are sounding," was composed whilst she was leaning against a wall, and it was sung by her as she lay dying. Reference has been made in the last chapter to the stirring missionary hymn, "Tell it out among the heathen," and its equally stirring tune. SIR H. W. BAKER has given us the words and tune of "My Father, for another night," and the REV. S. BARING GOULD of "Now the day is over."

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MR. P. P. BLISS, the American song-evangelist, is the most prominent example of a composer of complete hymns ; for, in addition to writing tunes for thirty-seven others in " Sacred Songs and Solos," he has bequeathed us the music and words of no less than forty-five of these. The most familiar are : " Ho, my comrades, see the signal," " I am so glad that our Father in Heaven," " Standing by a purpose true," " Have you on the Lord believed ? " " Free from the law," " Down life's dark vale we wander," " Through the valley of the shadow I must go," " Whosoever heareth," " Brightly beams our Father's mercy," " Only an armour-bearer," " Almost persuaded," " 'Tis the promise of God full salvation to give," " Hear ye the glad good news from Heaven," " Light in the darkness, sailor," " More holiness give me," " Weary gleaner, whence comest thou ? " " The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin," " Do you see the Hebrew captive kneeling ? " " Man of Sorrows," " Repeat the story o'er and o'er," " Tenderly the Shepherd," " See the gentle Shepherd standing," " Come, brethren, as we march along," " March to the battle-field," " Oh, Jerusalem the golden, city bright and fair," " On what foundation do you build, brother ? " " Will you meet me at the Fountain ? " " Sing them over again to me," " How much owest thou ? " " Only a few more years," and " Spirit Divine."

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Bliss wrote "Whosoever heareth" on listening to Henry Moorhouse, the English evangelist, preach on the text referred to; and "Almost persuaded" after hearing the following passage in a sermon: "He who is almost persuaded is almost saved, but to be almost saved is to be entirely lost." "Have you on the Lord believed?" was based upon a clergyman's story of how a vast fortune had been left in his hands for the benefit of a poor parishioner; and he had deemed it best to send it in small instalments, with the message, "This is thine, use it wisely, there is more to follow!" "Will you meet me at the Fountain?" was suggested by the fact that people constantly made appointments at the Chicago Exhibition to meet at the central fountain in the grounds. "Light in the darkness, sailor," is based upon the words of a shipwrecked sailor, describing why he and his mates forsook their ship. "All we could do was to leave her stranded, get into the life-boat, and pull for the shore."

The famous hymn "Hold the fort" is based upon General Sherman's message to 1,500 men of his army, who were guarding the earth-works commanding the Altoona Pass against an attacking force four times their number, during the American Civil War. The supplies of Sherman's whole army were centred here, and the outnumbered garrison were on the point of surrendering when a signal was seen at the top of a

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mountain twenty miles away, "Hold the fort. I am coming.—W. T. Sherman"; and three hours later the gallant defenders were relieved, though half the force had been either killed or wounded. "More holiness give me," was written on the day that Bliss gave up his business to devote his time and talents wholly to the Master's service: but he lost his life two years later, as described in Chapter III.

We have only space to refer very briefly to seven eminent musical composers who have enriched our hymn books by one or more tunes. JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH was born at Eisenach in 1685, and died in 1750. He came of a famous musical family, and became an organist at the age of nineteen, never aspiring to any higher position. Though a sound Protestant, and a man of deep piety, he chiefly composed services and masses for the Roman Catholic Church, and his Passion music alone would have made him world-famous. He is represented by three tunes in the "Ancient and Modern" collection: "Salzburg," to "At the Lamb's high feast we sing"; "Meinhold," to "Tender Shepherd, Thou hast stilled"; and "German," to "May the grace of Christ our Saviour."

HANDEL was born in Halle in 1685, when his father was 63 years of age, and early in life manifested a passion for music which was not inherited. His father, who had raised himself

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from the position of a barber to that of Court Surgeon, determined that he should be trained for the medical profession ; but his mother allowed him to play on a clarichord hidden in a garret, on which he taught himself. When he was only seven, his father took him to visit an uncle in the service of the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels ; and he managed to get access to the great organ in the Duke's private chapel. Hearing him play there, the Duke interceded with his father to allow him to be trained as a musician ; and he was taught by the cathedral organist of his native town. When he was only eleven, however, the latter declared that he could teach him no more than he already knew, and advised that he should be sent to Berlin for instruction in composition ; and he produced his first work of any note—a cantata for Good Friday, entitled “ The Passion ”—when in his twentieth year.

Finishing his musical education in Italy, Handel came to England in 1710, where his career was most chequered. Composing a “ Te Deum ” and “ Jubilate ” in celebration of the peace of Utrecht, he received from Queen Anne a pension of £200 per annum ; but the world of fashion was so capricious, and he was so generous in his munificence to poor musicians, that he twice became bankrupt. His first oratorio, “ Esther,” was composed in 1720, and was followed by “ Deborah ” and “ Athalie ” in

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1733, "Saul" (whence comes the famous "Dead March") and "Israel in Egypt" (written in the incredibly short space of twenty-seven days) in 1739, the world-renowned "Messiah" and "Samson" in 1741, "Judas Maccabæus" (to celebrate the victory of Culloden) in 1746, and "Jephtha" in 1751. The last-named was just completed when Handel became quite blind, and he died on the Saturday following Good Friday eight years later; being buried, according to his wish, in Westminster Abbey. The famous composer is represented in "Hymns Ancient and Modern" by his spirited tune to "Rejoice, the Lord is King."

HAYDN was born in 1732, and lived to be 77. His parents were of a humble station in life, but both were musical, and used to sing and play at home on Sundays and Saints' Days; their little son, when only six, keeping time on a sham fiddle. When he was nine years of age, he became a choir boy at St. Stephen's, Vienna; when only thirteen he wrote a Mass, and a stringed quartette at eighteen years of age. His first oratorio was that of "Tobia," which was produced in 1775; but his greatest effort in this direction, "The Creation," was not composed till 1799, having taken at least a year to write. His last sacred piece, "God preserve the Emperor," was written during the bombardment of Vienna by Napoleon, and it is in most of

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our hymn books under the name of "Austria." He also wrote the tune "St. Albans," which is set to "Forward be our watchword" in the Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer," and "Sacred Songs and Solos."

Haydn was a sincerely religious man, and used to write at the head of his compositions, "In the name of the Lord," adding, "To the praise of God" at the foot. When he was asked how it was that his Church music was so cheerful, he replied, "I write according to the thoughts which I feel. When I think of God, my heart is so full of joy that the notes dance and leap, as it were, from my pen; and, since God has given me a cheerful heart, it will be pardoned me that I serve Him with a cheerful spirit."

SPOHR was born in 1784, and died in 1859. He was the son of a doctor, and early showed his musical tastes; for, at the age of twelve, he played a concerto of his own composition in public. Winning the favour of the Duke of Brunswick, he received a post in the royal chapel, and finished his musical education at this sovereign's expense, becoming the Duke's premier violinist when only nineteen years old. His first oratorio was produced in 1812, but it was never printed; his best, "The Last Judgment," in 1826; and these were followed by "The Crucifixion" in 1835, and "The Fall of Babylon" in 1842. Spohr is represented in the "Hymnal Companion" by

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three adaptations, "As pants the hart for cooling streams," "Depth of mercy," and "It came upon the midnight clear."

WEBER was born in 1786, and died in 1826. He came of a very musical family, but he was almost as fond of painting and engraving, and his divided tastes hindered him in his youth. Nevertheless, when he was only twelve, his ambitious parents made him publish six little fugues, and he composed his first opera when he was not more than fourteen years of age. Four years later he became musical director at the theatre at Breslau, and, after other similar engagements, he became director of German opera at Dresden in 1818. Here he wrote his most famous work, "Der Freyschütz," but died in London on the eve of its production in Covent Garden Theatre, which was to have been his benefit. Weber is represented in the "Hymnal Companion" by the tune which bears his name, sung to "Ere another Sabbath close."

MOZART was born at Salzburg in 1756, but died at the early age of thirty-five, a victim to the over-taxed energies of his marvellous genius. His father, a learned and upright musician, was teaching music to his little girl of seven when he discovered his baby boy's superior talents, and began giving him lessons, for half an hour to an hour per day, when he was only three years of age. In his fifth year the child composed little melodies

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which his father wrote down for him ; and, when he was only six, his father took him and his clever sister to the Courts of Munich, Vienna, Paris, and London, to show off their juvenile precocity. A year later, the child dedicated two sets of two sonatas each to the beautiful Marie Antoinette, and in London composed his first symphony which was publicly performed. When he was thirteen, his father took him to Italy, to finish his musical education ; and, while at Rome, the Pope bestowed upon him the order of the Golden Spur. He settled at Vienna finally, where he composed all his most famous operas, and died just as he had finished his last great work, the "Requiem," which he had been commissioned to write for an Austrian nobleman, but which he felt all along would be his "swan song." The tune which bears his name is sung to "Come to me, Lord, when first I wake," in the "Hymnal Companion" ; and to "Take my life, and let it be," in "Sacred Songs and Solos."

MENDELSSOHN was born at Hamburg in 1809, and also died young, in 1847. He was the son of a converted Jew, an intellectual and accomplished merchant, and his mother was also very talented. She taught him music, and he made such rapid progress that he performed in public at eight years of age, published three pianoforte quartettes when only twelve, and composed his first and only opera when sixteen. His oratorio "St. Paul"

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was produced in 1836, the famous "Hymn of Praise" in 1840, and "Elijah" in 1846. He is represented in all our hymn books by his tune to "Hark, the herald angels sing"; and in the "Hymnal Companion" by those to "Brightest and best," and "By cool Siloam's shady rill."

In the early part of the nineteenth century, hymns and psalms were often sung to tunes crowded with twists, turns, and repeated lines, which were more calculated to minister to amusement than devotion. A writer in "Fraser's Magazine" for September, 1860, gives a very droll description of the choir at the church which he attended in his youth. He says, "We used to listen, with mingled awe and admiration, to the performance of the metrical version of the 18th Psalm in particular. Take two lines as an illustration of their style :

"And snatched me from the furious rage
Of threat'ning waves that proudly swelled."

The words "and snatched me from" were repeated severally by the trebles, the altos, the tenors, and the bass voices; then all together sang the words two or three times over. In like manner did they toss and tumble over "the furious rage," apparently enjoying the whirligig scurrying of their fugues, like so many kittens chasing their own tails; till at length, after they had torn and worried that single line, even to the exhaustion of the most powerful lungs, after a

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very red-faced bass, who kept the village inn, had become perceptibly apoplectic about the eyes, and a tall thin man, with a long nose (which was his principal vocal organ), who sang tenor, was getting out of wind, they all rushed pell-mell into "the waves that proudly swelled !"

We have only space to deal with a few of our leading hymn tune composers, who have changed all this, and given us simple yet sublime melodies to sing to our well-known hymns ; chiefly dealing with those whose tunes are to be found in "Hymns Ancient and Modern," which is probably the best of Church hymn books from a musical point of view.

DR. GAUNTLETT was born in 1806, and died in 1876, his father being vicar of Olney, in Buckinghamshire, where Newton and Cowper wrote their famous hymns. He became organist there at the early age of nine; and, when only sixteen, conducted a performance of "The Messiah," for which he had copied all the parts with his own hand. In his twentieth year he was articled to a London solicitor, but eighteen years later he relinquished the Law and adopted Music as his profession. He had obtained the degree of Doctor of Music in 1842, and became the organist of four London churches in succession. He was very intimate with Mendelssohn, who specially selected him to play the organ at his production of "Elijah" at Birmingham in 1846 ; and who gave the follow-

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ing high testimony to his remarkable gifts and powers : “ His literary attainments, his knowledge of the history of music, his acquaintance with acoustical laws, his marvellous memory, his philosophical turn of mind, as well as his practical experience, rendered him one of the most remarkable professors of the age.”

The crowning ambition of Dr. Gauntlett's life was the improvement of congregational singing throughout the land ; and, for the last forty years of his life, he was engaged in composing, editing, and publishing psalm tunes, chants, and anthems. Those who, like Dr. Gauntlett, feel that congregational singing ought to be encouraged, will appreciate the following mediæval legend, beautifully rendered in verse by the Rev. S. J. Stone, one of our modern hymn writers. The legend tells how seven holy men resolved to dedicate their lives to God, and took for their “ chapel ” a lovely forest glade. As they were old and unmusical, they repeated all their chants and hymns, and only sang the “ Magnificat,” which the Abbot told them they must render as best they could. The poem says :

“ So every day, at Vesper time, ‘ Magnificat ’ was heard;
’Tis said that, from the boughs above, it frightened
every bird,

For all were out of tune, and each a different chant
did try ;

But, up in Heaven, where hearts are known, it made
sweet melody.”

One Christmas Eve, a stranger joined them ;

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and they listened to his rendering of the "Magnificat" with such admiration that they themselves forgot to sing ; but they little knew how self so occupied his thoughts that, as the poem says :

" Though the birds came flying back, Christ couldn't hear a word."

Presently an angel appeared to enquire why no praise had been offered that night as usual, and the poem concludes :

" Then, bursting forth into the chants it was their wont to sing,
High up in Heaven, their hymn of praise with fervent hearts they fling ;
And the angel bore it on with him to Heaven's Lord and King."

It is recorded that the Rev. John Wesley was much annoyed at one of his services by an old woman persistently singing out of tune ; but, when he remonstrated with her, she replied : " My heart is singing, Sir " ; to which the famous preacher at once rejoined : " Then sing on, my sister ! " There is too great a tendency, in these " cultured " days, to leave all the singing to a trained choir, regarding it as a substitute for, instead of a sustainer of, congregational singing ; but we may learn afresh from this beautiful legend and story that God regards the hearts of the worshippers more than their voices.

All Dr. Gauntlett's efforts in composing hymn tunes were directed to providing those in which the congregation could easily join, and the

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following specimens show how well he succeeded :
“ St. George,” sung to the Christmas hymn
“ God from on high hath heard ; ” St. Fulbert,” to
the Easter hymn, “ Ye choirs of New Jerusalem ” ;
“ St. Albinus,” to the stirring words :

“ Jesus lives ! No longer now
Can thy terrors, death, appal us ; ”

“ Hawkhurst,” to the Whitsuntide hymn,
“ Come, gracious Spirit, heavenly Dove ” ; “ St.
Alphege,” to “ Brief life is here our portion ” ;
“ Evermore,” to “ Thine for ever, God of love ” ;
“ University College,” to “ Oft in danger, oft
in woe ” ; “ Laudate Dominum,” to “ O praise
ye the Lord ” ; “ Irby,” to “ Once in Royal
David’s city ” ; and “ I love to hear the story,” to
the hymn so commencing.

Dr. Gauntlett would write a tune with the
ease with which most people write a letter, and
was therefore a most prolific composer.

Thus, he wrote “ St. Alphege ” at the dinner
table, while a messenger was waiting, as the
proper tune for the hymn required could not be
found. It is worthy of note that “ Irby ” was
originally written as a melody, with an accom-
paniment, and not in four parts. On the morning
of the day of his death he wrote seven hymn tunes
before breakfast, passing away very suddenly
in the afternoon in his study ; thus writing for
the earthly sanctuary up to the time when the
Master summoned him to higher worship.

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HENRY SMART was a contemporary of Dr. Gauntlett, being born in 1813, and dying in 1879. His uncle, Sir George Smart, was a celebrated musician and composer, and gave lessons in singing till he was over eighty years of age. As a boy, Henry was passionately fond of engineering, and his mechanical drawings at the age of twelve were so remarkable that, had means been forthcoming, he would doubtless have become an eminent engineer instead of a clever composer. He had extraordinary natural faculties for music, being to a great extent self-taught, and playing the organ soon became his constant habit. Obtaining the post of organist at the Parish Church, Blackburn, when only eighteen, he would often remain shut up there till very late at night, mastering the difficulties of the instrument, and doubtless sorely trying the patience of the organ-blower ! Five years later, he left Blackburn for London, and was successively organist at St. Philip's, Regent Street, St. Luke's in the City, and St. Pancras' Church, which latter post he occupied till his death.

At an early age he suffered from defective eyesight, which became worse till he ultimately became blind, and had to dictate all his compositions to an amanuensis. He loved, while playing, to give due expression to the words of every hymn ; and, for this purpose, he had a youth always sitting by him to read the words in

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order that he might drink in the spirit of the writer.

He had much to do with the planning and erection of organs, for which his musical talents combined with his mechanical skill eminently fitted him ; and personally superintended every detail of the making of the organ for St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, though quite blind at the time.

He was very severe in his criticisms, and fearlessly outspoken in his opinions, as the following two incidents show. When someone remarked on the fine reeds of an organ in a Leeds chapel, he contemptuously exclaimed : " Fine indeed ! are they ? The only sort of sounds I can liken them to is what I have heard in cottages when they're frying sausages ! " Again, when a young curate was enthusiastically eulogizing Gregorian chants, which were his pet abomination, he exclaimed : " Now look here ! this won't do ; who asked your opinion, Sir, upon musical questions of which you evidently know absolutely nothing ? You may rely upon it that, some day, when you and your friends are shouting those ugly Gregorian chants, Heaven will punish you, and rain down bags of crotchets upon your heads, and prevent you from ever singing them again ! "

Smart's compositions show great versatility, ranging from oratorios and cantatas to hymns and chants ; and there is probably no more

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popular setting of the "Te Deum" than "Smart in F." His best-known hymn tunes are "Rex Gloriæ," to the fine Ascension hymn: "See the Conqueror mounts in triumph"; "Pilgrims," to "Hark, hark, my soul"; "Regent Square," to "Light's abode, celestial Salem"; "Paradise," to that familiar hymn; "Miseræcordia," to "Just as I am, without one plea"; "St. Leonard," to "Oh for a faith that will not shrink"; and "Vexillum," to "Brightly gleams our banner"; also "Lancashire," composed for a Nonconformist missionary meeting.

DR. J. B. DYKES, who was born in 1823 and died in 1876, was not a professional musician but a clergyman; yet he has given us more hymn tunes suited for congregational use than any other man. As a child he showed a remarkable faculty for music, which seemed to come to him by instinct; and he could play from ear long before he was able to do so from note. At the early age of ten years he was accustomed to play upon the organ in his grandfather's church at Hull, and it is said that one of the greatest punishments that could be inflicted upon him as a boy was to debar him for a time from this favourite occupation. Going to Cambridge to study for his degree, he became the conductor of the University Musical Society, which assumed a foremost place among English musical institutions under his able leadership.

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Yet he never neglected his studies, and, taking his B.A. degree with honours, he was ordained, and in two years became Minor Canon and Precentor of Durham Cathedral.

In 1861, the degree of Doctor of Music was conferred upon him by that University ; and, in the following year, the Dean and Chapter presented him with the living of St. Oswald's, Durham, which he held till his death. Though trained as an Evangelical, he was won over by the Oxford Movement, and maintained his new views with such fervour that at last he was prosecuted in the Ecclesiastical Courts by his Bishop.

Dr. Dykes wrote upwards of two hundred and fifty hymn tunes and carols, and used to say that he always offered a short prayer before composing anything, which fully accounts for the deep feeling and religious fervour of his music. The following is a list of his best-known tunes : " Strength and Stay," to that beautiful Evening hymn ; " Pax Dei," to " Saviour, again to Thy dear Name we raise " ; " St. Andrew of Crete," to " Christian, dost thou see them ? " ; " St. Drostane," to " Ride on, ride on in majesty " ; " St. Cross," to " O come and mourn with me awhile " ; " Olivet," to " Thou art gone up on high " ; " Nicæa," to " Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty " ; " Rivaulx," to " Father of Heaven, whose love profound " ; " Gerontius," to " Praise to the Holiest in the height " ; " St.

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Agnes," to "Jesu, the very thought of Thee"; "St. John," to "Behold the Lamb of God"; "Hollingside," to "Jesu, Lover of my soul"; "Dominus regit me," to "The King of Love my Shepherd is"; "St. Cuthbert," to "Our blest Redeemer"; "Alford," to "Ten thousand times ten thousand"; "Vox Angelica," to "Hark, hark my soul"; "Come unto Me, ye weary," to that lovely hymn; "Vox Dilecti," to "I heard the voice of Jesus say"; "St. Bees," to "Hark, my soul, it is the Lord"; "Lux Benigna," to "Lead, Kindly Light"; "St. Oswald," to "Through the night of doubt and sorrow"; "Horbury," to "Nearer, my God, to Thee"; "St. Aelred," to "Fierce raged the tempest o'er the deep"; "St. Sylvester," to "Days and moments quickly flying"; "Dies Dominica," to "We pray Thee, Heavenly Father"; "Hosanna we sing," to that favourite children's hymn; "Almsgiving," to "O Lord of heaven, and earth, and sea"; "Charitas," to "Lord of glory, Who hast bought us"; "Melita," to "Eternal Father, strong to save"; "Dies Iræ," to "Day of wrath, O day of mourning"; "Requiescat," to "Now the labourer's task is o'er"; and "Beatitude," to "How bright those glorious spirits shine."

Dr. Dykes generally composed his tunes away from any musical instrument, sometimes in a railway train, sometimes during a solitary

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walk ; thus the setting of "Hark, hark my soul" came to him while ascending Skiddaw, and that of "Lead, Kindly Light," during a walk along the Strand.

At his death, a memorial fund was inaugurated for the benefit of his family ; and, in response, over £10,000 was contributed—a striking proof of the way in which his music had touched the heart of the nation. The Rev. Dr. Allon, a well-known Nonconformist minister, wrote : " I shall esteem it a great privilege to contribute, as an expression of common gratitude for his rich and precious contributions to the worship song of almost all English-speaking congregations."

The composer who next claims our attention is DR. W. H. MONK, the Musical Editor of "Hymns Ancient and Modern," who was born in 1823 and died in 1889. He was successively organist of Eaton Chapel, Pimlico ; St. George's Chapel, Albemarle Street ; Portman Chapel, Marylebone ; St. Matthias', Stoke Newington ; and King's College, London, of which latter place he became Professor of Vocal Music. He would doubtless have remained a comparatively unknown musician had it not been for the immediate and unprecedented success of the hymn book which he edited, and to which he contributed very largely.

His best-known tunes are : "Eventide," to "Abide with me" ; "Nutfield," to "God that

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madest earth and heaven ” ; “ St. Matthias,” to “ Sweet Saviour, bless us ere we go ” ; “ Merton,” to “ Hark, a thrilling voice is sounding ” ; “ St. Philip,” to “ Lord, in this Thy mercy’s day ” ; “ Ascension,” to “ Hail the day that sees Him rise ” ; “ St. Constantine,” to “ Jesu, meek and gentle ” ; “ Beverley,” to “ Thou art coming, O my Saviour ” ; “ Vigilate,” to “ Christian, seek not yet repose ” ; “ St. Ethelwald,” to “ Soldiers of Christ, arise ” ; “ Evelyns,” to “ At the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow ” ; “ Unde et Memores,” to “ And now, O Father, mindful of the love ” ; “ Waltham,” to “ Not for our sins alone ” ; “ Melton Mowbray,” to “ The voice of God’s creation found me ” ; “ Milites,” to “ We are soldiers of Christ, Who is mighty to save ” ; “ All things bright and beautiful,” to that popular children’s hymn ; “ Samuel,” to “ Hushed was the evening hymn ” ; and, “ Oh, the bitter shame and sorrow,” to Monod’s beautiful words.

The popular tune to “ Abide with me ” was written in ten minutes, while a pianoforte lesson was going on in the same room ; and the setting of “ Thou art coming, O my Saviour ” was composed in a railway train. Dr. Monk was a strong purist in church music, and could not tolerate any tune which savoured of secular influences ; while he did not quite approve of

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organ recitals in churches, holding that the organ should only be used as an adjunct to worship. To him it was an instrument, not for the display of skill, but for touching the souls of men ; and he manifested wonderful power and pathos in playing devotional hymns. His vicar said of him, in his memorial sermon : " He taught many to praise God who had never praised Him before, and others to praise Him more worthily than hitherto."

SIR JOSEPH BARNBY was born at York in 1838, and died in 1896. He was the youngest of seven brothers, all of whom have displayed musical talent, and was himself a born musician.

He became a chorister when seven years old, and organist at twelve, and four years later entered the Royal Academy of Music as a student. After holding several posts as organist at various London churches, he became precentor and director of music at Eton College in 1875, where he did much to develop musical tastes among the sons of the aristocracy.

His greatest and best work has, however, been the training and conducting of large bodies of singers, in which he was wonderfully successful ; and this is the more remarkable because he only worked with amateur vocalists. Beginning with the choir of St. Andrew's, Wells Street, he succeeded Gounod as conductor of the Royal Choral Society in 1871.

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As a composer, Barnby was very versatile and original ; thus in secular songs, " When the tide comes in," and " Sweet and Low," are deservedly popular ; while his Church Service in E, and such anthems as " O Lord, how manifold are Thy works," are famous. His hymn tunes have a flow of beautiful melody, combined with a richness of harmony, which has been rarely surpassed by English writers ; and among the best known are : " Cloisters," to " Lord of our life, and God of our salvation " ; " An endless Alleluia," to that famous translation from the Latin ; " Laudes Domini," to " When morning gilds the skies " ; " For all the saints," to Bishop Walsham How's magnificent words ; and " O Voice of the Belovèd," to that sweet Easter hymn.

SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN, probably the best-known and most popular of English musicians, was born in London in 1842, and died in 1900. At the age of eleven, he became a chorister in the Chapel Royal, St. James', and while there wrote several anthems ; one of which so pleased the then Bishop of London that he sent for him into the vestry after service. and, patting his black curly head, gave him half-a-sovereign. In his youth he was very friendly with Barnby, whom he just succeeded in beating for the Mendelssohn scholarship when it was first instituted. He and the future Sir John Stainer were also great

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friends as boys, and used to take penny trips together on the Thames steamboats, their enjoyment being considerably enhanced by a copious consumption of nuts and oranges !

Sullivan was only fourteen when he obtained the Mendelssohn scholarship, and studied at the Royal Academy of Music under John Goss and Sterndale Bennett. Two years later he went to the Leipsic Conservatorium, and while there composed his music to Shakespeare's "Tempest." Returning to England when twenty years of age, its production caused a great sensation in musical circles, and Jenny Lind came out of her retirement on purpose to sing at his first concert in St. James's Hall.

From that time onward, his career was one of unbroken brilliant successes, his versatility being marvellous. When we remember that the same composer has produced such oratorios as "The Light of the World," and "The Prodigal Son" ; such cantatas as "The Martyr of Antioch," and "The Golden Legend" ; such songs as "The Lost Chord," and "The Distant Shore" ; and such comic operas as "H.M.S. Pinafore," "The Pirates of Penzance," "Patience," "Iolanthe," "The Gondoliers," and "The Mikado," we may well be amazed at the versatility of his genius. All his music, vocal and instrumental alike, is characterized by tuneful melodiousness and exquisite refinement, so that

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it satisfies the critical instincts of the trained musician while delighting "the man in the street."

He received the honorary degree of Doctor of Music at Cambridge in 1876, and at Oxford in 1879, while he was knighted in 1883. He composed his music when most other people were composed in slumber ; to use his own words : "When postmen cease from troubling, and omnibuses are at rest !"

Considering his early training in the Chapel Royal, it is not surprising that his church music attains such a high standard of excellence. He was the musical editor of "Church Hymns," to which he contributed 21 original tunes, most of which found their way into other collections.

Probably the favourite with most congregations is his spirited setting of "Onward, Christian soldiers," which is not included among the tunes in "Ancient and Modern." A noteworthy feature of this fine tune is that the tenor of the first four bars becomes the melody of the next four, and vice versa. The tunes in the "Ancient and Modern" collection include "Lux Eoi," to "Alleluia, Alleluia, hearts to heaven and voices raise" ; "Resurrexit," to "Christ is risen, Christ is risen" ; "Cæna Domini," to "Draw nigh and take the Body of the Lord" ; and "Golden Sheaves," to "To Thee, O Lord, our hearts we raise."

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DR. HOPKINS was born in 1818, and died in 1901. When only sixteen years of age, he aspired to the post of organist at Mitcham Church ; and, when the committee of selection hesitated to appoint him on account of his youth, Turle (who was then the organist of Westminster Abbey) sent word : "Tell them, with my compliments, that, if they fear to trust Hopkins to accompany chants and hymns at Mitcham Church, I do not hesitate to trust him to play services and anthems at Westminster Abbey."

That, of course, settled the question ; and nine years later he was appointed organist and choirmaster at the famous Temple Church. He was a firm believer in thoroughness in choir training, especially in the matter of clear enunciation of the words sung ; and also in the music illustrating the words to which it is wedded. "Music," he said, "should so reflect the words that a foreigner, ignorant of our language, should be able to tell the character of the words from the character of the music."

His best-known tunes in the "Ancient and Modern" collection are "St. Hugh," to "Lord, teach us how to pray aright" ; "St. Raphael," to "Jesus, Lord of life and glory" ; and "Children's Voices," to "Above the clear blue sky."

SIR JOHN STAINER was born in 1840, and became a chorister in St. Paul's Cathedral when

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only seven years old, at which age he was already no mean performer on the organ. One day, both Goss, the regular organist, and Cooper, the deputy, were away ; and young Stainer was playing. "It was a fortunate thing for me," he said, "that both these great lights were extinguished for the day. The late Sir Frederick Ouseley had come to ask whether either of them could recommend a young organist for his recently founded college at Tenbury, and he came up into the organ loft, where he found me getting along very comfortably ; and so, in the evening, he wrote me a very kind letter, asking if I would play his organ." The invitation was, of course, accepted, and the young musician not only found the post thoroughly congenial but very helpful, as Sir Frederick Ouseley possessed the finest musical library in the world. While he was there, Sullivan came to visit him, and the boy friends got the idea into their heads that gutta-percha would make a cheap and resonant substance for organ pipes. Their financial resources being limited, they got together a few old gutta-percha shoes, and set to work with ardent enthusiasm ; but were stopped in their experiments, because of the horrible smell which ensued !

Stainer's promotion was very rapid, for at the age of nineteen he became organist of Magdalen College, Oxford, and in the same year took his

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degree as Bachelor of Music. Soon afterwards he was appointed organist to the University, and took his degree as Doctor of Music ; while he founded the Oxford Philharmonic Society, and revived the Choral Society in connection with the University.

When only thirty-two years of age, Dr. Stainer was appointed organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, in the choir of which he had sung as a boy. Under his predecessor, Sir John Goss, the choral music had been anything but satisfactory, owing to his easy-going nature, and the lack of interest on the part of the Cathedral authorities ; but, under Stainer's vigorous yet tactful management, a great reformation was effected. He was the first to introduce oratorios with full orchestral accompaniment into the metropolitan Cathedral, and vast congregations have from time to time had the privilege of hearing these sublime masterpieces beautifully rendered amidst the most appropriate surroundings.

Dr. Stainer retired from his post in 1888, owing to impaired eyesight, and in the same year received the honour of knighthood from Queen Victoria. Directly afterwards he was appointed Professor of Music at Oxford University, a position which practically placed him at the head of his profession in the country, and died in 1901. The character of the man is well shown by the following remark which he made in a speech to

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the College of Organists in 1889 : "I was one Sunday walking at some seaside place, and on turning a corner I heard a number of Sunday School children singing a hymn I had composed. I want no higher reward than this for all my work, and can only tell you that I would not exchange it for the very finest monument in Westminster Abbey."

Sir John Stainer's compositions have been almost entirely sacred, and his cantatas (such as "The Daughter of Jairus," and "St. Mary Magdalene") are the delight of choral singers everywhere ; while his well-known oratorio on "The Crucifixion" is well within the capabilities of good church choirs. His Services in E flat and A are regularly rendered, while such anthems as "What are these which are arrayed in white robes?" are deservedly popular. His hymn tunes, too, are quite congregational in character, the best known in the "Ancient and Modern" collection being "Vesper," to "Holy Father, cheer our way" ; "Credo," to "We saw Thee not when Thou didst come" ; "St. Paul's," to "Lord Jesus, think on me" ; "Magdalena," to "I could not do without Thee" ; "Charity," to "Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost" ; "The roseate hues of early dawn," to the beautiful hymn commencing thus ; "The Blessed Home," to Sir H. W. Baker's stirring words ; "Author of Life Divine," to John Wesley's short but sweet

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Communion hymn ; “ Pastor Bonus,” to “ Christ, Who once amongst us as a child did dwell ” ; “ In Memoriam,” to “ There’s a Friend for little children ” ; “ Iona,” to “ Heavenly Father, send Thy blessing ” ; “ Rest,” to “ The saints of God, their conflict past ” ; “ Woodlyn,” to “ My Lord, my Master, at Thy feet adoring ” ; “ Love Divine,” to Charles Wesley’s fine words ; and “ Covenant,” to “ The God of Abraham praise.”

Any account of the makers of modern sacred music would surely be incomplete without some notice of the world-famous singer and evangelist, IRA D. SANKEY, whose “ Sacred Songs and Solos ” have revolutionized the singing at Evangelistic Services. He was born in Western Pennsylvania in 1840, and converted at the age of sixteen during some Revival Services held near his home. He became superintendent of the Sunday School, and leader of the choir, at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Newcastle, where he had found employment in a bank, after helping his father in farm work as a youth. He married a member of the choir in 1863, and was much in demand as a singer in the neighbouring States.

It was in 1870 that Sankey first met his future co-worker, Mr. Moody, at a Y.M.C.A. Convention in Indianapolis, where he started the hymn : “ There is a fountain filled with blood ” ; and Mr. Moody told him, in his usual brusque fashion, that he must come and help him in his work at Chicago.

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After over six months' hesitation, Sankey consented, and the famous pair worked together in that city till the great fire temporarily stopped the enterprise. Two months later he returned to Chicago, his indefatigable colleague having erected a temporary Tabernacle ; and in 1873 they accepted an invitation to conduct an Evangelistic tour in Great Britain. Ere they landed, both the gentlemen who had sent the invitation had died, but they held services at York, Sunderland, Liverpool, and Edinburgh, to ever increasing congregations ; and then visited London, where the Queen and many members of the Royal Family attended some of the meetings. Two years were spent in the first campaign in Great Britain, many of the leading cities being visited, and services also held at Eton, Oxford and Cambridge for the students. Succeeding years were spent in Evangelistic tours in America and Great Britain, till the partnership (which had been so spiritually prolific) was severed by the death of Mr. Moody in 1899, his colleague (who had meanwhile become blind) following his partner to Glory in 1908.

Besides compiling " Sacred Songs and Solos," which contained seven hundred and fifty hymns, and was subsequently added to, Mr. Sankey composed the music to about seventy of them ; the best-known being : " Yet there is room," " There were ninety and nine," " A long time I

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wandered in darkness and sin," "I've found a joy in sorrow," "O Christ, what burdens bowed Thy Head," "Nothing either great or small," "I have a Saviour, He's pleading in glory," "Beneath the Cross of Jesus," "It passeth knowledge," "Simply trusting every day," "Oh for the peace that floweth as a river," "Call them in, the poor, the wretched," "Oh, safe to the Rock that is higher than I," "Jesus, I will trust Thee," "Jesus, my Lord, to Thee I cry," "Oh, do not let the Word depart," "Come, oh come, with thy broken heart," "Lone and weary, sad and dreary," "My life flows on in endless song," "Light after darkness," "I must walk through the valley of the shadow," "Oh, precious words that Jesus said," and "On that bright and golden morning." He also composed the words and music of "Home at last, thy labour done," in memory of a young convert ; but, surely, the closing verse has a more suitable application to its author :

"When earth's songs have all been sung,
Labour ended, trial done,
We'll meet again ; Oh, happy word !
And be for ever with the Lord."

The world-famous hymn : "There were ninety and nine," has a remarkable history. Mr. Sankey saw the words in a Scotch magazine, entitled "The Children's hour," while travelling from Glasgow to Edinburgh in 1874, and read them to Mr. Moody, on whom they seemed to

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make no special impression. Two days later, the great Evangelist spoke upon Jesus as "The Good Shepherd," and Dr. Horatius Bonar followed on the same theme. Turning to his colleague, Moody asked him to sing an appropriate solo ; and Sankey, placing the cutting from the magazine on the organ, improvised the well-known melody, not a single note of it being afterwards changed !

We may fittingly conclude our survey of the story of Sacred Song with three appropriate quotations. The famous composer, Mozart, said that "Music is a harbinger of Heavenly melody" ; and Legh Richmond wrote : "Music is designed to prepare us for Heaven, to educate us for the choral glories of Paradise." The Rev. Charles Kingsley said : "All melody, and all harmony upon earth—whether in the song of birds, the whisper of the winds, the concourse of voices, or the sounds of those cunning instruments which man has learned to create—all music upon earth, I say, is beautiful in as far as it is a pattern and type of the everlasting music, which was before all worlds, and shall be after them. . . . Therefore music is a sacred, a divine, a Godlike thing ; and was given to man by Christ, to lift up our hearts to God, and make us feel something of the beauty and glory of God, and of all which God has made."

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Choirmasters as Hymn Writers

When choirmasters have written the words of hymns (says a correspondent), they have usually achieved a wide success. The late B. Mansell Ramsey, whose Shaftesbury Hall Choir at Bournemouth was famous in the evangelical world a quarter of a century ago, wrote three hymns widely used at mission services in England and America: "Jesus is Calling," "Lord, bring some Wanderers Home To-night," and "Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord."

But the most famous of choirmasters was the author of the one hymn we possess for the safety of sailors at sea: "Eternal Father, Strong to Save." William Whiting, who wrote the words so aptly wedded to Dykes' well-known tune, *Melita*, so called from the scene of Paul's shipwreck, was choirmaster of Winchester Choristers' School. His centenary occurs on November 1, on which date all congregations will surely sing his hymn in memory of him.

1924

DATE DUE



